Vol. 2 No. 12
December 1987

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# Michigan Atari Magazine

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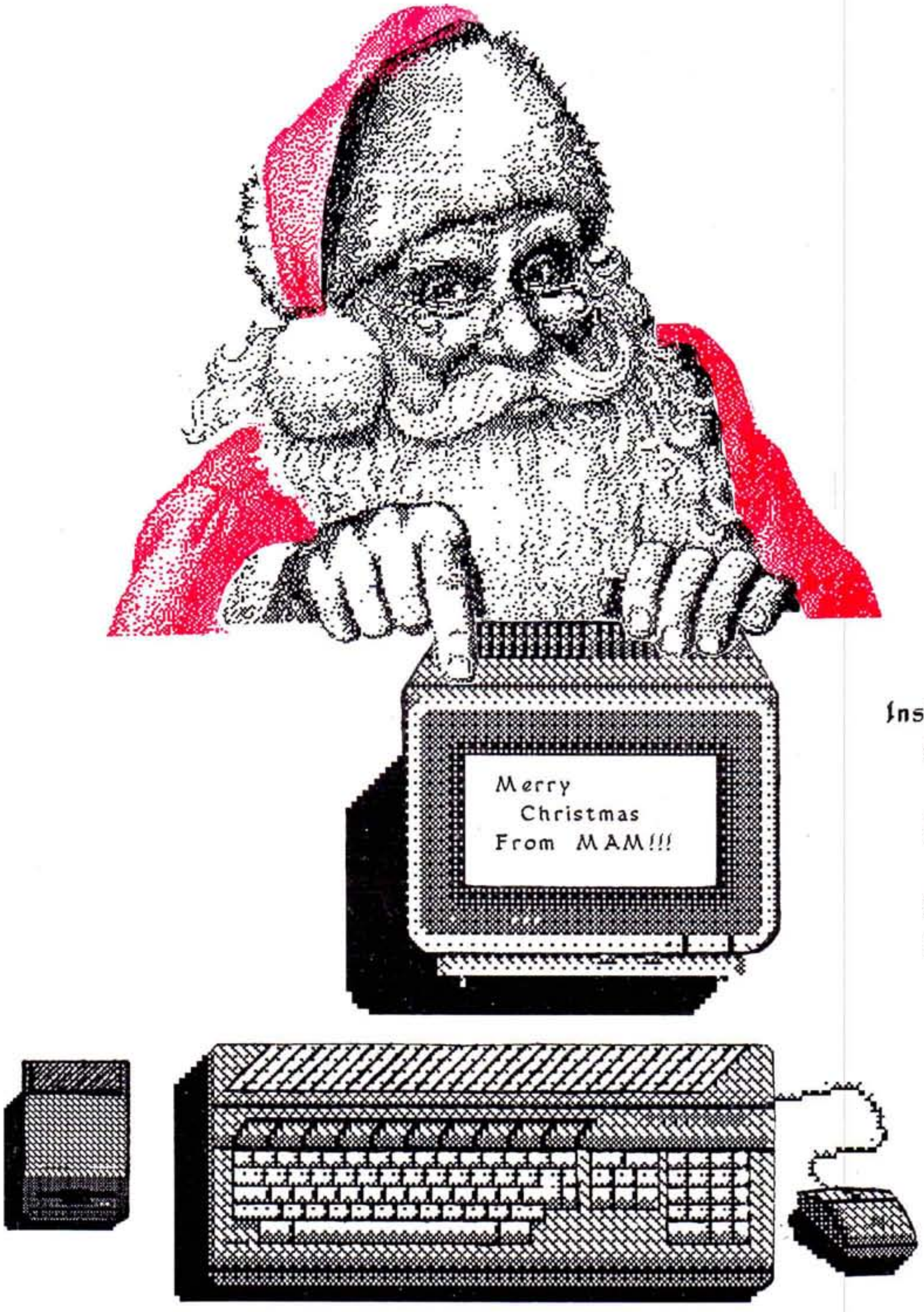

Inside this issue:
- Atari News and Comment
- Interview with Neil Harris
- Silicon Spelunking
- Build Your Own 8bit Power Supply

and MORE...

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Vol. 2, No. 12
Dec. 1987

# MAM this Month

## Features

## Club News and Minutes

## Advertisers

Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM) is the official newsletter of several independent Atari user groups and is not affiliated with Atari Corporation in any way.

# From the Editors' Desks

Seasons Greetings, and welcome to the new look of the Michigan Atari Magazine.

We've had an educating experience putting this issue together, and we know it will continue to be lots of fun in the future. But, we sure do know what John Nagy has gone through in the past one and a half years he's operated this magazine. He deserves all the compliments he's gotten in the past and a warm thanks from us all!

It's also been very educational traveling to some of the user groups to tell them of the changes we planned and get their input. We would like to thank GRASS, BKAUG, and GAG for allowing us to bore them to death with our ideas for improvements on what they knew to be an already fine magazine. We had lots of fun hunting down their meeting places, and seeing how the groups operate. There is a lot of diversity in these user groups. Here's to keeping it that way!

We'd also like to welcome MACE into the happy MAM family. For those of you unfamiliar with Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, MACE is based in Southfield and at one time was the largest computer user group in the world. They're still not small and they have some very talented members. MACE has stopped production of its own well-known Journal to join MAM and we're glad to have them along!

One of our planned regular features, space permitting, will be a "Letters to the Editors" section for you to voice your concerns about MAM, Atari, or computing in general.

Another article we would like to continue is "On the Fritz," the question and answer column on page 4. This month's column is reprinted from the Nov. WAUG! newsletter for the benefit of all MAM readers who couldn't see it there. To contine this feature, all we need is questions from *you*. Bob Fritz is an authorized Atari Service Technician and he's just dying to answer your questions!

Letters and questions can be sent to our mailing address or uploaded to the Treasure CheST BBS at (313)973-9137.

I guess the only thing left to say is a quote from an ad for a certain wine cooler..."Thank you for your support."

## ATARI NEWS AND COMMENT

*Editorial By JOHN NAGY*

### *Is there a PC in Atari's Future? Maybe Two...?*

Before the PC clone is even available, it has been re-dubbed the PC-1, making room on the roster for the PC-2, a PC/AT clone with slots.... In the meantime, the PC-1 release is being pushed back by failing FCC certification. More interference-preventing internal shields must be added. It is rumored that monochrome-bundled PCs will only come with EGA color graphics instead of EGA and CGA. This has not been confirmed.

### *LOCAL ATARI NETWORK*

Named (can you believe it?) "Moses' PromisLan," Atari promises a cheap and effective interface for up to 17 STs and "common IBM" machines using common bell wire. Shown at COMDEX, it joins the list of "coming" products, with an unreleased release date.

Meanwhile we wait, and wait, and... for the Atari Laser Printer, which, by the way, is not going to be the cheapest or most versatile $1500 (price now is $1995) printer -- if it emerges as planned. Several other, "standard" lasers have hit the market (and shelves!!) since Atari announced its laser printer.

We can hope that a reason for the holdup may be some liscensing agreements for the Postscript graphics language. Despite becoming an industry standard, the rights to use or emulate the Postscript system are copyrighted, and expensive. If Atari can either cut a deal or come up with a viable alternative, the Atari Laser may yet find a market, *even though* you will need an Atari computer to use it.

### *Booty for Non-Pirates*

Piracy of commercial programs is such a problem in the low-end computer market that many software companies just give up. Another move is to get tough. Michtron, one of the leading ST software marketers, has offered a bounty on pirate boards, telecommunication services offering illegal copies of commercial programs. Turn in a BBS number verifiable to have Michtron programs on it, and Michtron will give you $200 or $400 of free software. Turn in three numbers, and Michtron will give you a hard drive! Sounds a bit like vigilante justice to me, but what else can a company do? Michtron, 576 S. Telegraph, Pontiac, MI 48053, (313)334-5700.

Whitehouse Computer, an advertiser in many magazines and club newsletters, has reportedly closed and filed for bankruptcy. The Williamsport, PA, mail order house specialized in, among other things, Atari software and supplies. Apparently there are over $200,000 worth of claims and about $20,000 in assets at the closing. If you lost money to Whitehouse, you may hear from lawyers with a "cents on the dollar... someday" offer.

Widely reprinted in many club newsletters has been a warning about the "XM-301 time bomb," detailing how bare wires inside the Atari modem caused burned-out interfaces, smoking disk drives, burping computers, and, possibly, constipation in laboratory mice. While the possible problems may be exaggerated considering the low voltage levels and protocols on the serial loop, it certainly is worth a look if you are having any trouble traceable to the presence of the modem. Open the box and look to see if, like some others, you have bare wires showing on the unused leads in the I/O cable. If these leads can touch each other, there could be trouble. Tape anything you find that looks suspicious.

## 'Phoneside' Chat with Neil Harris

*by Pattie Snyder-Rayl*

I don't know whether to call this an editorial or an interview -- it's a little of both. I spoke with Neil Harris to confirm/clear-up some "rumors" I heard in the Atari community. Some of those rumors were very negative, and I wished to hear Atari's side of the issues.

I had originally planned a question and answer format, but decided people might need more background on some of the topics. So I explained some of the topics before getting to the "meat" of it all -- Neil Harris's (and through him, Atari's) response. Ready? Here we go...

Walt Wilson, recent Atari VP for U.S. Marketing, left Atari employment due to some internal conflict with the company. Rumor has it he was not very happy with the way Atari does things.

The addition of Walt Wilson, formerly of Apple, to the Atari staff was looked on as a very good move by outsiders. His main responsibility was to set up a strong dealer network for Atari. He attended the Detroit MAGIC show, and I briefly spoke with him there. Wilson said he had a "plan" for Atari's dealer network, and he was beginning the "implementation stage." This doesn't sound to me like a man who was going to be "moving on" this soon!

Unfortunately, Neil Harris declined to speak on this topic. "No comment," was all I could get. I'm glad he was more open to discussion on the rest of my questions or this would've been a short article indeed!

Moving on to new hardware announcements, I asked Neil Harris about the CD ROM drive Atari announced at COMDEX for $650. The drive is a "read only" device which will plug into the DMA port and will work with both the STs and Megas.

According to Harris, the drive may be available in the US as early as the first quarter of 1988. When asked if the drive allowed for "daisy-chaining" of other DMA devices, Harris was uncertain.

As for the storage capacity of the drive, "The drive will be able to store 550 megabytes," Harris said. I replied by saying every account I had read stated Atari had chosen a format which could hold only (and I use the term loosely!) 350 megs. "No," Harris said. "It will hold 550 megs; that's pretty standard."

When asked to comment on a report that a read/write CD drive was up and running on an ST in England -- to be released by an independent company sometime late next year -- Harris said, "I don't believe that's true. There is no way you're going to see a WORM (Write Once, Read Many) drive at a home price in the near future."

**This machine will be primarily used as a graphics workstation. As your needs grow, the machine can grow with them.**

According to Harris, CD WORM drives typically cost around $15,000! Strange that I have a price quote for an IBM CD WORM drive, about $4,000 for a 400 meg or $5,000 for a 600 meg. Not quite "home price" but....

Since COMDEX, there has been a lot of talk, and some speculation, about Atari's announced "workstation." For those who are unfamiliar with this latest hardware announcement, the workstation will be a 32bit machine running Helios, a UNIX-like operating system.

The hardware is based on the INMOS-800 Transputer, a CPU which uses parallel processor chips for speeds starting at 10 million instructions per second! That's over five times faster than the 68020 chip with math processor and 10 times faster than a PC/AT.

Harris would give no firm release dates or price. Other sources within Atari say production may begin in the spring of '88, and the low-end system would be around $5,000. Low-end consists of a monochrome Mega 2 and Transputer, which plugs directly into the Megas. The transputer can accept up to 16 additional parallel processor chip modules, increasing the speed with each addition!

"This machine will be primarily used as a graphics workstation," said Harris. "And, as your needs grow, the machine can grow with them."

If Atari gets this machine into the market in the next 12-18 months, they may have a shot at beating the MAC II and Suns (from Sun Microsystems) in the graphics workstation market. I know I won't be buying one, but I hope they can pull it off. We'll have to wait and see.

Now, back to something a little closer to us all -- the Megas. When Harris was asked to comment on why the Megas have a fairly high incompatibility rate with existing ST software, he said, "Some people have some funny ideas. Most of the software that doesn't run is copy-protected games, and it's the copy protection causing the problems by making illegal calls, etc., not the software."

I asked Harris about the "Mega Dead List" by Andy Nicola of Futuretronics in Cleveland, Ohio (Mega IV BBS, 216-779-4237, see the November issue of MAM for the actual list.). He said he had seen the list and stated a number of the programs "ran perfectly" on the Mega.

"From personal experience, I have logged many hours playing Silent Service, and I assure you it works just fine," Harris said. "I'm not sure why Andy has put this list together, but some of it is wrong."

Most of the titles on the list are games, as Harris stated, but some of the notable non-games are GFA BASIC 2.0, Dollars and $ense, Pro-Fortran 77, VIP Professional, Magic Sac 4.36, Mark Williams C and Publishing Partner. I have personally seen Publishing Partner running on a Mega, but I did not "test" to see if it ran correctly. Regardless, I think I'll stick with my current ST and just upgrade to 2.5 megs!

As for the Mega/Laser combo, Harris says people will still be able to get the hardware for $3,000. A monochrome Mega 2 retails for $1700 and Atari will be selling the Laser, when it becomes available, for $1995. Adding it up, that comes to $3,695.

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When asked if Atari will be expecting dealers to swallow the difference, Harris said, "Yes. Dealers of other computer do it, and it's not that difficult for dealers to do." Hmmm....

Finally, I questioned Harris about messages that appeared on a few California BBSes. The messages claimed Neil Harris, a SysOp on GEnie, had told some paying customers of the network they "would be locked out of the [Atari] Roundtable" if they continued to criticize Atari. Also, some other disgruntled GEnie users have claimed messages of a critical nature are being deleted.

Harris replied "Those statements are absolutely not true. This comes from a six-month-old note, and I wish someone would reprint it. There were a lot of people comparing the ST vs the Amiga. It just went on and on, and was really pointless. There's a separate place on GEnie for this kind of stuff. I sent mail to these people telling them to keep the discussions where they belonged or I would use my powers as SysOp to make sure it gets done. That's all there was to it."

Harris went on to say Atari has about 20 employees with active accounts on GEnie, including people in their Engineering and Technical Support areas. Many of these people don't necessarily leave public messages, but they do send Email to people with questions.

At the end of this "interview," Harris expressed concern over the negative questions. "In my opinion," he said, "these questions seem to be coming from a hostile point of view." That was not my intent, although I admit the questions I raised were decidedly not cheery! I informed Harris I was simply interested in hearing Atari's response to the "rumors that have been floating around." "Well," Harris said, "I hope this conversation has helped clear-up some of those rumors."

## On the Fritz

*Hardware Tricks and Tips from Bob Fritz*

Q) I own a 520 ST and want to upgrade to 1 Meg. I also want the ability to later upgrade to 2.5 Megs for sure, possibly 4 Megs, without losing the original upgrade. What upgrade would you recommend and why is that one better?

A) I have personally installed two of these type of upgrades, both being able to go from 1 Meg all the way up to 4 Megs depending on your budget. They both are touted as no solder for the 1 Meg version and trace cutting for the 4 Meg version. As for recommending one over the other, I would have to recommend the one from Tech-Specialties over the one from E. Arthur Brown because of the way they pick up the data lines to access the extra ram. That, and the fact you can get an internal clock on the upgrade board as well. Addresses:

Tech-Specialities
909 Hodgkins, Suite A
Houston, Texas
77032
(713) 590-3738

E. Arthur Brown
3404 Pawnee Dr.
Alexandria, MN
56308
(612) 762-8847

Q) Is it possible to make a detachable keyboard for my 130XE? I think it can be done, but a friend of mine says I'm nuts. How hard would this be to do and what would be involved?

A) First off, it would be possible, but kind of hard, and not very pretty when you are done, as the XE does not have a keyboard processor like the ST. Which means you'd have to have a connecting cable that had 25 lines on it with a connector at each end.

Q) My mouse keeps geting all kinds of junk on the rollers from the rubber ball. What's the best way to clean this stuff off? Is there any way to prevent this buildup? Also, my mouse buttons stick once in a while. Replacing the mouse would cost $50! Is there any way I can get a cheaper replacement?

A) The best way to clean the mouse rollers is to use a cotton swab and isopropol alcohol and a small fingernail file. First, swab the alcohol on the rollers, then take the nail file and carefully scrape them side to side as they turn. Do each roller until you got it all. I used to use a mouse mat with teflon coating, which greatly reduced the crud. I say "used to" because now I'm using a track ball modified to work with the ST so you have a stationary "mouse" and the only thing that touches the ball is your hand. No mouse mat and no need for the room on your desk that a mat takes up, no more moving the mouse from one icon to another only to run out of the mat halfway there! The track ball is $20 cheaper than replacing the mouse also. Address for track ball:

Zebra Systems
78-06 Jamaica Avenue
Woodhaven, NY 11421
(718) 296-2385

P.S. They use Wico track balls so you know they're heavy duty.

**Editor's Note:** Bob Fritz is a certified Atari service repair person and is president of CP Technologies in Whitmore Lake. This was reprinted from the WAUG November newsletter.

# DE-ARCing ST Files with One Single-Sided Disk Drive

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While using the ARC utility to join and squeeze related files into one easy to download file can be a great advantage, it can also create some *very* large files on your disk.

Many of the ARChived files that are available were created by people who are using double-sided disk drives, and thus the final files may be large enough to cause problems for single-sided disk drive owners. The following method of 'UN-ARCing' files onto a single-sided disk drive has been successfully tried with two large ARC file groups, namely: BUBBLES. ARC and XMASDEMO.ARC

When using ARC.TTP, the greatest problem is the inability to re-direct the output of the process onto a different disk from the one the ARChive file resides on. Thus your disk must have enough room free for *both* the ARChived version, *and* the final, normal versions of the files. In many cases, this is not possible.

What saves us in this case is that is is possible to re-direct the input of the 'de-ARCing' process, that is, to take the input from somewhere else. If you use the DCOPY 1.90 utility, you *can* re-direct the output of the de-ARCing process, but you must have two disk drives to do it.

The answer to the dilemma of the single disk drive owner is to create a temporary second disk drive by using a "ram disk" in memory. Here is the step-by-step process for the two large ARChives that were tried, others should follow the same general procedure. Note that it *may* be possible that some ARChived groups just cannot be done at all on a single-sided drive.

First of all, turn off your computer. On a 512K 520ST, you'll need all the RAM you can get. Then boot up, using a disk with *no desk accessories* on it! This is important, to save memory, and because ARC does not seem to like sharing the computer with anything else...!

Next, install a RAMDISK in memory. I use the one called FASTRAM.TTP. If you use that one, install it like this: click on its icon or filename. A dialogue box will appear... type in: d250 (this indicates you

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want the RamDisk to be drive D, and want it to be aproximately 250K... this should handle most of the ARChived files we will have... if it is bigger than 250K, indicate a larger number in the dialogue box... much bigger though, and it probably won't fit on a S.S. disk when 'un-ARCed').

The disk drive will spin and you should see a message that a Ram Disk of 250K has been installed. Then the screen should go back to the disktop. Click *once* on the Disk Drive A icon (so it turns black), then go to the OPTIONS menu on the desktop, and click on INSTALL DISK DRIVE.

A dialogue box will open... press the Esc key to erase the disk drive identification letter (it will say A right now), then type in D (do *not* press RETURN here!).. move down and click on the button marked INSTALL in the dialogue box. A new disk drive icon will appear just to the right of the existing ones on the desktop. If you have any windows open, you may have to close them, or move them out of the way to see it. You can then drag the new icon into line with the other disk drive icons.

Your Ram Disk is now installed... Now, put the disk containing the ARChived file which you want to restore to its normal, runnable condition into your disk drive, and copy the file into the Ram Disk. (Don't do anything to the disk containing your original .ARC version of the file until you're certain that the unARCing process was successful, just in case!)

Next, take a blank, formatted disk, and copy the program, ARCX.TTP onto the new disk. (ARCX.TTP is a special version of ARC.TTP, used only for 'De-ARCing' files... it is about half the size of the regular ARC, and can be obtained as part of the ARChive called ARC.ARC, or by itself.

At this point, you should have the ARCed file you want to 'de-ARC' in a Ram Disk called disk drive D, and a new blank disk with only the program ARCX.TTP on it, in your floppy disk drive.

Open the disk drive directory window for drive A, and click on ARCX.TTP. A dialogue box will appear. Type in: D:\XMASDEMO.ARC, then press RETURN. (Of course, substitute the filename of the ARCed file you are processing. For example, you would use D:\BUBBLES.ARC for the Shiny Bubbles demo.)

Your disk drive should start up, and the regular ARC messages should begin appearing on your screen as the 'de-ARChiving' process proceeds. When the process is complete, the program will return to the desktop. You can then delete the ARCX.TTP file from your disk, and you should have a running version of the ARCed file. The Ram Disk will still be in memory, taking up space, and the new disk may not run, so the best way to remove the Ram Disk is to simply turn off the computer and re-boot it.

NOTE: The Shiny Bubbles Demo is *so* big, that it takes a little more work to get 'De-ARCed' properly. The 'De-ARCing' process will halt with an error message: Write fail (disk full?) because there isn't enough room to finish the process with the ARCX.TTP utility still on the disk. However, the huge data file will be intact.

To finish the process, delete the partial file SB.PRG, and ARCX.TTP from your disk. Then remove the disk, and copy the program ARC.TTP from a floppy disk onto the Ram Disk, drive D....

Open the directory window for drive D, and click on ARC.TTP... a dialogue window will open.. now type: xh BUBBLES.ARC SB.PRG. Note the spaces between the filenames. You're telling ARC.TTP to *extract and hold the display,* from the ARChived file BUBBLES.ARC, ONE of the files that are contained in the ARC, in this case SB.PRG.

This will deARC *only* the SB.PRG file from the ARC file, *into the ramdisk!* Once the process is finished, replace the disk with the Bubbles Demo files in your disk drive, and copy the file SB.PRG onto the disk from the RamDisk. That should give you a running copy of the Shiny Bubbles demo, on a single-sided disk.

This technique can be used for other large ARCs. It may take a little experimentation, or moving of files between disks, but generally, it *can* be done.

Also, these techniques only cover the very basic operations involved in using the ARC utilities. There are GEM based 'shell' programs which make all of the steps a lot easier to use, but which take up memory and disk space which may be needed on a minimal system to be able to unARC a large file at all.

The DCOPY.190 utility can also be used to unARC files between a Ram Disk and a single disk drive, but again, it takes up memory. It's a long process, but just think of all the money you've saved on downloading connect time charges... money you can put toward purchase of a double-sided drive!

# Building a Replacement XL\XE Power Supply

*By Don Neff (MACE)*

### *THE PROJECT*

Some time ago, I wrote an article describing how to troubleshoot and repair your Atari power supply. At the time that article was written, Atari was using a two-tone (coffee and cream) power supply which was easily disassembled by removing four screws. As soon as the article was published, Atari switched to a black, sealed power supply which was not repairable. To make matters even worse, this new power supply has a higher failure rate than the old two-tone power supply. This article provides you with the information you need to build a new power supply for your XL or XE. Figure 1 shows the schematic circuit of the new power supply.

### *THE ADVANTAGES*

The power supply you are going to build will be better than your original from Atari. First, it's easily repaired if a problem develops. Second, it's heavily filtered to help eliminate interference on your monitor screen. Third, it has self contained surge protection to prevent damaging voltage spikes. Fourth, and of special interest to SysOps, the power supply can provide back-up power through very short power loses (the type that make your house lights flicker but not go out). Fifth, if someone expresses an interest in it, I can show you how to modify the circuit to provide battery back-up power through a lengthy power outage.

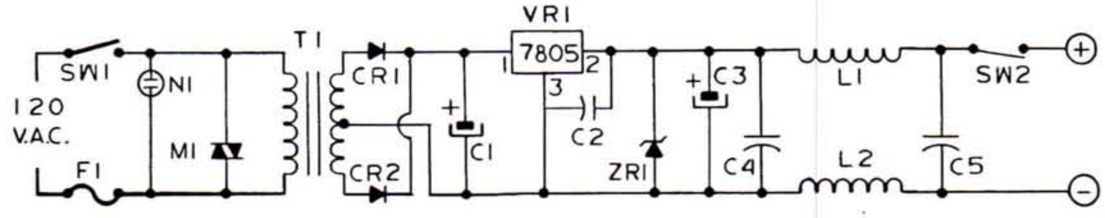

FIGURE ONE

### *CONSTRUCTION*

Resist the temptation to use a printed circuit board, and instead, use point-to-point wiring on the mounting lugs to construct this circuit. Begin by marking and drilling all the holes for the mounting screws, cords, and switches. Next, mount the transformer at the rear of the box with two 4-40x1/4 machine screws and nuts. Install the lug tie strips in convenient locations in the remaining space by using one 4-40x1/4 machine screw and nut for each strip. VR1 must be attached to the side of the box using a 4-40x1/4 machine screw and nut. Gently bend the legs of VR1 away from the metal of the box to avoid the possibility of shorts. Now, construct the circuit as shown in Figure 1. Pay special attention to the polarity of capacitors C1, C3, diodes CR1, CR2, ZR1 and the leg numbering sequence of VR1 (see Figure 2). C2 should be attached directly to legs 2 and 3 of VR1. The leads of C2 should be as short as possible.

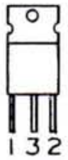

FIGURE TWO

If you are replacing an existing Atari power supply, you should cut the two power cords off of it for use on this new power supply. Otherwise, you must buy the plug and cords shown in the parts list. The plug in the list is a five pin plug which is similar to the Atari seven pin plug shown in Figure 3.

Unfortunately, this five pin plug is identical to the Atari video plug for your monitor signal. If you accidentally put the power supply plug in the video jack, you will almost certainly damage your computer when you switch the power on. Therefore, you should label both of these plugs at this time to avoid getting them confused with one another later.

Cut the AC plug off of one the Radio Shack two-wire line cords and replace it with the five-pin plug. Connect one wire to the two pins on one side of the plug and the other wire to the two pins on the opposite side. No connection is made to the fifth pin at the bottom.

Figure 3 shows the reassembled plug as if you are looking at the pins and the wire is extending away in

FIGURE THREE

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looling at the pins and the wire is extending away in front of you. The wire connected to the pins on your Left should be connected to SW2 at the point identified with a "+" in Figure 1. The wire connected to the pins on the right of Figure 3, should be connected to the junction of L2 and C5. Do not connect this wire to the case or to a ground. Doing so will disable the interference filter.

### THE CIRCUIT

M1 is a Metal Oxide Varistor (MOV) which provides the surge protection. It works by providing a short circuit to excessive voltages (such as surges). An extended period of high voltage will cause the MOV to fail and become a permanent short circuit to protect your computer. This, in turn, will blow fuse F1 to protect your house wiring. If, in the future, you find that F1 has failed and all replacement fuses also fail quickly, you should suspect that M1 is bad and replace it. N1 is a neon pilot light which also contributes slightly to the surge protection.

CR1, CR2 and C1 rectify the AC to DC. Your voltmeter should indicate approximately nine volts DC across C1.

VR1 is a five-volt regulator. VR1 will get hot and must be attached to the metal case to provide a heat sink.

ZR1 is a Zener diode which provides over-voltage protection in case VR1 fails. Remember that zener diodes are mounted in reverse polarity compared to standard diodes. If your voltmeter shows less than three volts across C3, you probably have ZR1 installed wrong.

C3 is a five-volt storage capacitor which acts like a battery. C1 and C3 will keep your computer running through those momentary power outages we mentioned earlier. SysOps may want to extend this power back-up capability by adding more C1's and C3's. Just add the additional capacitors in parallel to the ones shown in Figure 1. The more you add, the longer your computer will run without power. But, keep in mind that for the price of several extra capacitors you could install battery back-up instead. C4, C5, L1, and L2 provide filtering to reduce electrical noise. SW2 is an optional momentary switch to provide cold reboots without wear and tear on your console switch.

Reassemble the power supply case, making sure there are no loose wires touching the case metal. Use your voltmeter to check for five volts DC across the plug, with polarity as shown in Figure 3. If everything checks out ok, you can plug this new power supply into your computer and become an Atarian again.

### NOTE FROM THE AUTHOR

This article and many of my other Atari service/construction articles are in the public domain. Any user group may reproduce my articles for free. I would appreciate receiving a complimentary copy of your newsletter containing my article. I also welcome your comments and suggestions concerning my Atari articles. You may contact me by writing to: Don Neff, Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts, P.O. Box 2785, Southfield, Michigan, 48037.

### PARTS LIST

| Item | Description | Radio Shack# |
|---|---|---|
| C1 | 4700uF Cap. | 272-1022 |
| C20 | .1uF Tant. | 272-1432 |
| C30 | .1F Cap. | 276-1440 |
| C4,5 | 47pF Cap. | 272-121 |
| CR12 | 3 Amp Rect. | 276-1141 |
| F11 | Amp Fuse | 270-1250 |
| L12 | 100uH Choke | 273-102 |
| M1 | MOV | 276-568 |
| N1 | Neon Pilot | 272-712 |
| SW1 | AC Switch | 276-602 |
| SW2 | Momentary Sw. | 275-619 |
| T1 | Transformer | 273-1511 |
| VR1 | 5 Volt Reg. | 276-1770 |
| ZR1 | Zener Diode | 276-561 |

### MISCELLANEOUS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
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## ST Notes

*By LeRoy Valley (TAG)*

This month is going to be very short and sweet since I'm under the ax. (This baby has to be done in about 15 minutes!!)

If you haven't seen Spectrum 512 you're really missing something! This program is as far beyond Degas Elite as Degas was beyond Neochrome! The pictures are stunning. And to top it off, Trio Engineering (the creators of Spectrum 512) are offering a product called Digispec.

This desktop accessory converts your Computereyes pictures into 512 color pictures! AND it has the capability of producing 29 shades for each color thus giving you over 14,000 colors in a digitized picture. This accessory makes bad looking pictures look like photographs. (No, I'm not kidding.) Available from Trio Engineering for $34.95. Spectrum 512 is *not* required to use Digispec.

I just bought an Indus GTS-100 3.5" disk drive, and it is quiet! So quiet in fact, that you can't hear the heads step. The drive is small and seems to perform satisfactorily. It is a bit quicker than my SF-314, and the on-board track readout is slick. Now as long as Future Systems stays around...

ProCopy version 1.50 is now shipping and can backup virtually everything on the market. Even new programs like Air Ball, Trail Blazer, and Plutos can now be backed up. If you need a backup program, I still say that Procopy is the way to go!

You've got Publishing Partner 1.02 and can't load in more than 8 fonts at a time? Send in your disks and get 1.03...the problem is fixed!

Well that's it. My 15 minutes are about up. Next month I promise to review Font Partner v1.1, a fantastic utility for making and editing fonts for Publishing Partner! Until next month...

## Eight Bits' Worth

*By Gordon Totty (MACE)*

The August issue of ABACUS, the newsletter of the Atari Bay Area Computer Users' Society (San Francisco), contained an interesting article by Charles Cherry. Cherry reviewed the Antic Catalog for us. I paid particular attention to his views because he is a former Product Manager for the catalog; also, he writes for Antic, and does occasional projects for the catalog. Some might consider him biased; I felt I was getting good "inside" advice from a fellow user group member. He especially liked the following products:

Colorspace – weird, wonderful, "best demonstration of what Atari graphics can do," "should be required for all Atari owners." I have ordered this on his say-so, but it is no longer listed in the catalog, and so I do not know if I will get it. Cherry did not comment on the incredible shrinking Antic 8Bit catalog, which has been apparent over the past few months.

Creative Process – the only outline processor for the Atari, and recommended for research papers and other writing where outlining is helpful. The catalog lists this for $19.95, and warns stock is limited.

Envision – "Ok, it's a font editor. We never said that out loud at Antic. But, it really is more than that. Buy it, even if you already have 12 font editors. Buy it, even if you don't know what a font editor is. Some day, you'll thank me." My copy is on order, Charles. I'll be happy if this is half as good as you think it is. List, as available, $19.95.

Seven Card Stud, Cribbage – "Everyone should have some card games on their computer. These are my nominations." Neither is listed in the latest catalog.

Charles Cherry probably wrote his article in June; I'm writing in early November. You can see that the catalog has shrunk. By the way, all of the items listed above were given four-stars by Cherry. His three-star recommendations are listed below.

Rambrandt – "The most powerful drawing package for the Atari." $19.95.

Solid Object Module -- A 3-D modeler for Rambrandt. $15.95.

Orbit, A trip to the Moon -- I have this one in my collection, and will try to let you know what I think of it when I get around to using it. At a glance, it looks like a very serious simulation. The author, John Reagh, is a Lockheed aerospace engineer. It's $15.95 at present; I think it used to cost more.

Blue Team Bridge -- "The best Bridge game on the Atari." $15.95

Colossus Chess 3.0 -- "No longer the most powerful game on the Atari, but I think it is the most playable. If you are serious about chess, get Colossus." I have the old Atari chess cartridge, and more recently obtained The Chessmaster 2000. So, I'll pass on this, even though it is listed as a catalog best seller at $15.95.

The Rhythm Composer -- a drum machine. I couldn't find it listed, but sometimes, the bi-focals let me down. To order Colorspace, I called the toll-free number, and got the item number from the person who answered. You might want to try that.

Spell Magic -- a spelling checker. Works with PaperClip and AtariWriter. $19.95.

Printer Driver Construction Set -- "Best of its kind." Requires AtariWriter cartridge. I almost bought this when my Mannesmann Tally Spirit 80 and I were not getting along. I switched to AtariWriter Plus instead. $19.95.

Astrology -- I couldn't find it listed.

Floating Point Package and Extended DDT -- "...get this now, it's a steal." These work with MAC/65 and are sold as a package for $19.95.

The Dragon's Tail -- "I'm responsible for putting this into the catalog. It is eccentric and poorly organized, but, it is unique and undeniably powerful. If you program in BASIC, you will find much to like here, and some to hate." Such honesty from Charles Cherry sent me right to my order blank. I've got to see this one. Presently listed in the bargain section for $5.95, was $24.95.

Amis xm10.bbs from MACE -- "A first rate bulletin board for the Atari 300 baud modem." Golly, one from us! Public domain, $10.

130XE Hi-Res Designer -- Not that great, according to Cherry, but it is the only mode 8 paint program available. It works only on the 130XE. Public domain, $10.

Trivia Quiz -- Public Domain, $10.

Personal Finance and Education -- Public Domain. I couldn't find this listed.

If I counted correctly, Charles Cherry gave five items a four-star rating, and gave three stars to 15 items. Eight items received two stars. Seven items got one star. Four items got no star. To illustrate his objectivity, I should point out that one star was defined by him as "forget it." No stars were given to products he knew nothing about.

I own Earth Views, which got two stars ("A good value for the money."). I agree this is not a three or four star product. The Family Tree, which I got because I wanted some kind of genealogy program, got one star. I probably should have forgotten it; I could have done as well just using Syncalc spreadsheet to record the data. So, my personal experience seems to line up with Charles Cherry's recommendations.

I think he wrote an excellent review which performed a valuable service. As he pointed out, some of the catalog stuff is well worth owning, but you hear very little about it. First, Antic does not review it in their pages, nor do competitor magazines. People might buy more of this software if they knew more about it.

Also in August, Chy-Wy-Tari (Cheyenne, Wyoming) published a neat bit of humor, which I hope I may reproduce here. Their newsletter is silent on the subject of copying; most letters say it is ok to copy anything as long as you give credit. Somebody let me know if we go to war with Wyoming over this. If so, I'm heading for cover; the Marlboro Man lives out thataway somewhere!

## *Computer Quiz*

*Compiled By Big Al*

Here is a simple quiz to test your computing position. Answer each one YES or NO, and compare your answers to the rating at the bottom!

1) Do most of your friends have computers?
2) Do you use your computer every day?
3) Have you ever forgotten what someone was telling you while you were using your computer?
4) Have you ever eaten cold dinner or missed dinner because you were computing?
5) Have you ever spent more than you could afford on computer items?
6) Were the last five books you read about computers?

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7) Have you ever taken over parts of your house just so the computer has enough room to work in?
8) Have you ever lost sleep because you were using the computer?
9) Are most of the gifts you receive related to computers?
10) Have you ever lied to get out of doing something so there is more time to compute?

This highly unscientific test was designed to be funny, so don't be worried if it did not make much sense. The results show if you answered yes to five or less questions, you are either still normal or you just bought the system last week. Between five and eight yes's means you should look for treatment of your addiction. Nine or ten positive responses and you are hooked just like the rest of us, and you might as well make the best of it.

(End of excerpt.)

The Wyoming group credited Big Al of the BRACE/ S*P*A*C*E/STARBASE group with originating this gem. How did you do? I can answer yes to eight of these, maybe nine. I get the score that high by using a little judgement. For example, I don't use my computer EVERY day. I do't take it on vacation with me, and some days I stay away from it in the interest of domestic peace and harmony. But I WANT to use it every day, so I give myself half of a yes on that one. Now, do you suppose a real computer fanatic *does* take the computer on vacation, if he/she goes on vacation, and uses the computer *every day,* spouse be damned?

The real humor was in the next piece where a computer fanatic named Calamity Jane explained her answers to the quiz. And so, excerpted from "More on the Computer Quiz," by Calamity Jane, are the following selected answers.

3) That is one problem with computers. You get so tuned in to them you completely ignore what is going on around you. A statement must be said three times before it is heard. That is why my old man and I communicate via Email.... The sight of blood will ususally catch the computing person's attention.

4) I have burned dinner several times. Start dinner, sit down at the ST and totally space it out! I ate a totally black chicken once! And I know the fine art of balancing the plate on my lap.... Guess I need a hot plate down here. A small refrigerator is next. Then I never have to leave.

5) I always spend more money on the computer than I should. But, what the hay. It takes top priority. I would rather have disks than eat.... Poor kid, goes to without BASICs like shoes. She had to wear roller skates to school once, cause her shoes blew out, and I had blown all the money on a new disk drive. I lucked out once again – it was Halloween!

8) Sleep? What is sleep? You should have seen me explaining to my old man, one morning at six, that I wasn't up early, I hadn't been to bed yet!

9) All of the gifts I buy or receive are for the computers. If I can't buy you something for your computer, forget it. You get nothing! I forgot how to buy clothes a long time ago....

10) I will do nearly anything to make more time to compute. I never fold the laundry anymore... just dig it out of the dryer. Food is zapped in the microwave, or a check is shoved at a pizza guy at 12:33 a.m. I am forgetting the spoken version of the English Language, but boy, can I type! I don't waste time running upstairs to get coffee, that baby comes down to me! Toilet paper never gets put on the roller-thing anymore; the neighbors forgot my name; I am forgetting how to drive, cook, write with a pen and paper, but boy, do I know FLASH! Priorities! You just got to get your priorities straight. I named the dog Shamus. The two cats are Packy and Zaxxon. My Mom told me it was a good thing I had already filled out the birth certicicate on the kid, or the poor thing would of gone through life explaining her name.

(End of excerpt.)

Well, guys, which of you still believes there is no such thing as a perfect wife? Hats off to Calamity Jane! Do you get the feeling she has forgotten the name of "the kid?"

Miss Calamity, ma'am, I have read your stuff before, and I shore do enjoy it! I hope you forgive the heavy editing, but I can only type so much on an empty stomach. I think I ate once when the sun was up. Or was that the moon? Whatever.

One more newsletter, and we'll close this out for this month. This is a plug for another user group. Free advertising for the Boston Computer Society. This month, I was fortunate enought to read the "Jackintosh Boston User Group" newsletter, aka J-Bug. This is an ST publication, so this piece of the piece is 16Bits' worth. This newsletter was 87 pages long, a whopper. It can be yours for $35 a year, less if you're a full-time student, a youth or a senior citizen. There's more. You will also get the Computer Update Magazine, a calendar newsletter, a BCS buying guide, membership in 51 user and interest groups, admission to over 1,000 meetings and events, use of the BCS Resource Center and Library, discounts from more than 300 companies, access to electronic bulletin boards, public domain software, telephone support and referrals, and admission to The Computer Museum in Boston. Sounds like a lot, and makes you want to move to Boston, doesn't it? Of course, without living in the Boston area, you cannot take advantage of all this, and a lot of it is available through our very own group.

I left something else out. You get to pick two BCS newsletters of your choice, like J-Bug, mentioned above, and A-Bug for Atari 8Bit users. Or, Amiga, Apple, Commodore, CP/M, or any two of 37 newsletters. If two is not enough, you can have as many as you want for $4 each per year for all over two.

There is one fly in this lovely ointment. I can't tell you how often these newsletters are published, but J-Bug is not published monthly. The issue I saw was Summer '87 (quarterly?), and there was a Jan/Feb '86 issue, as well as a Mar/Apr '86 issue (bi-monthly? A random event?). I don't know, but you can find out by writing to the Boston Computer Society, One Center Plaza, Boston, MA 02108, or call 617-367-8080. Looks to me like a "downtown" kind of organization. Now, don't go drop MACE! I'm sure you have a longer drive to Boston than to Southfield.

## ST Filetypes & Filename Extensions: What Needs What to Run?

*Copyright 1987, Robert J. Retelle, Permission to reprint granted*

There are many different types of files available for the ST from BBSes, on-line services, and user group software libraries, some of which are ready-to-run programs, but many of which require some kind of preparation before they can be used.

Generally the description in the software library or the documentation that comes with the program will tell you if the file or program needs any special treatment, or if any other files are required. The most important indicator of what the file is though, is the "Filename Extension."

The Atari ST computer allows disk files to have names consisting of up to eight letters or numbers, and an Extension consisting of three more letters or numbers. The name is separated from the extension by a period:

FILENAME.EXT MEGAROID.PRG

You can't use spaces or most other characters in the filenames. You *can* use the underline character to separate words if you wish:

GAME_1.PRG HI_SCOR.DAT

Usually, the name will tell you what the file is, and the extension will tell you what type of file it is. There are three types of files which can be run on the Atari ST computer directly:

.PRG .TOS .TTP

.PRG Files are generally programs which use Gem (windows, menus and the mouse). You run these programs by double clicking on their icon or filename from an open directory window.

.TOS Files are generally programs which do *not* use the Gem desktop. You run them the same way as .prg files.

.TTP Files are special versions of TOS programs which need certain input from you before they can run (TTP means TOS Takes Parameters). When you run these programs by clicking on them, a dialogue box will open on the screen and you can type the needed information on a line in the box. You will need to know, either from the file description in the software library, or from reading the documentation for the program, what to type for a particular program.

Note that while these programs will *run* on the ST, they may need other files on the same disk with them to work properly. The file description or documentation should tell you if other files are required.

Files which might be required by a program include:

.RSC .DAT .PIC

.RSC Files are resource files used by Gem programs, and contain information needed by the program to run. The .RSC file *must* be on the same disk as the .PRG file, and must have the same filename as the .PRG file:

MEGAROID.PRG MEGAROID.RSC

.DAT Files are data files, to be used by other programs. You might see these called .D8A files occasionally. They generally must be on the same disk as the program which will use them.

.PIC Files are PICTURE files which are loaded onto the screen by the program being run. Again, these generally must be on the same disk as the program.

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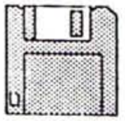

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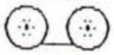

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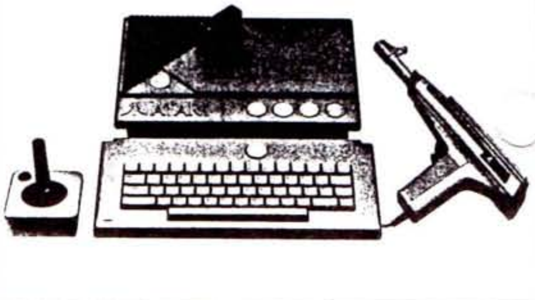

There may be other types of files required to run a program, but these are the most common ones. If you find a file with an unusual EXTENSION, it's possible that it is one of these required files.

There is a special form of programs for the Atari ST, called ACCessories. These are programs which are loaded into the computer's memory when the computer is first turned on, and remain there, ready to be used from within other Gem based programs. ACCessories may include calculators, clocks, notepads and other useful applications. They allow you to switch to other functions without leaving the program you are running. There are even game accessories which allow you to play games while you're supposed to be working with spreadsheets or word processors...!

To load an accessory, copy it onto the disk you use when you first turn on your computer. Up to six accessories can be on this disk, allowing up to six choices of accessories in your programs. Note that accessories take up memory in your computer, which will decrease the amount of memory available to other programs. Accessories are identified by the Filename Extension:

.ACC

Another common type of file is one which contains text or documentation in a readable form:

.TXT    .DOC    READ.ME

Generally these will be information or instructions needed to run a program. These files can usually be read directly from the desktop by clicking on their icon or filename, and selecting SHOW from the alert box which pops up on the screen. You can also usually print these files on your printer by selecting PRINT from the same alert box.

The READ.ME file is usually included on a program disk or as part of a group of files to give you important information about new features or updates. You *should* read it before trying to use the program!

Note that the files created by word processors may NOT be readable from the desktop SHOW function because of the special formats they save the text with. One example is files identified with a .STW extension. These are created with the STWriter program, and need to be loaded back into that word processor to be read or printed.

Also note that files created with the Publishing Partner desktop publishing program have a .DOC (Document) extension, but are *not* readable from the SHOW option of Gem.

At times, programs may come with files containing the original 'source code' that was used to write the program. These files are usually not necessary to just run the program, and are only of interest if you would like to see how the program was written, or if you would like to modify the program.

These source code or programming files are generally identified:

.C .MOD .PAS .ASM .H .SRC

Programs written in certain languages, such as BASIC or LOGO cannot be run by themselves. They need to have the language itself loaded into the computer and run first, then the actual program can be loaded and run by the language. These programs are identified:

.BAS    .LOG

Note that there are now several different BASIC languages in use on the ST, and the programs for each of them are generally not interchangeable with other kinds of BASIC. The description of the file in the software library should tell you which BASIC language you will need to run the program.

## *MUSIC AND GRAPHICS FILES*

There are several kinds of files for various music and graphics programs available in software libraries. In most cases, the filename extension will help identify the kind of program you will need to use to display the picture, or play the music.

.SNG Currently, the most popular music program seems to be The Music Studio from Activision. The great majority of music files available require the use of the Music Studio program to play. There is as yet *no public domain* player program for these song files. You must first load and run your Music Studio program, then load and play the .SNG files.

.NEO This identifies a file as a picture drawn using Atari's NEOchrome drawing program. These files are always in *low* resolution, and may contain 'color rotation' animation effects. NEOchrome files are always contain 32128 bytes. NEOchrome pictures can be displayed by loading them into the NEOchrome program, or by using one of several picture display programs. One good choice is EFFETS.PRG.

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.PI1 This is a low resolution picture drawn using the Degas drawing program. Degas pictures are always 32034 bytes long. You can use Degas itself to display the pictures, or a display program. DEGASPIC.PRG is a good stand-alone viewer program to use.

.PI2 This is a *medium* resolution Degas picture.

.PI3 This is a *high* resolution Degas picture.

.PC1 These are drawings done with the Degas Elite drawing program, and saved .PC2 in compressed format. They correspond to the same resolutions as the .PC3 Degas files with the same number in the filename extension. Because they are compressed, they will be smaller files than the normal Degas files. The actual number of bytes will depend on the complexity of the picture. Both compressed and uncompressed Degas Elite pictures can be displayed by using SHOWPIC2.PRG.

.TNY This indicates a picture which has been compressed using Dave Mumper's Tinystuff program, and is referred to as tiny format. These pictures can be either NEOchrome or Degas originally. If the original picture was a NEOchrome drawing with color rotation animation, the animation effects will be preserved in the .TNY file. To display tiny format pictures, use TINYVIEW.TN1. These are picture files compressed with Dave Mumper's new TINYSTUFF2 .TN2 system. Use TNYVIEW2 to view them. .TN3.

*SUMMARY OF FILETYPES*

.PRG Runnable GEM program .TOS Runnable TOS program .TTP Runnable program which requires input

.RSC Resource file required to be on the disk with its .PRG program .DAT Data file used by a program .PIC Picture file used by a program

.TXT Readable text file .DOC Readable Documentation (instructions) file

.C .MOD .PAS .ASM .SRC Source Code files for programmers

.BAS BASIC program. Requires a BASIC Language to be loaded first .LOG LOGO program. Requires LOGO language to be loaded first

.SNG Music Studio music file. Requires Activision's Music Studio program

.NEO NEOchrome drawing. Use EFFETS.PRG to view

.PI1 .PI2 .PI3 Degas drawing. Use DEGASPIC.PRG to view

.PC1 .PC2 .PC3 Compressed DEGAS Elite drawing. Use SHOPIC2.PRG to view

.TNY Compressed TINY format picture. Use TINYVIEW.PRG to view

.TN1 .TN2 .TN3 Compressed TINY2 format picture. Use TNYVIEW2.PRG to view

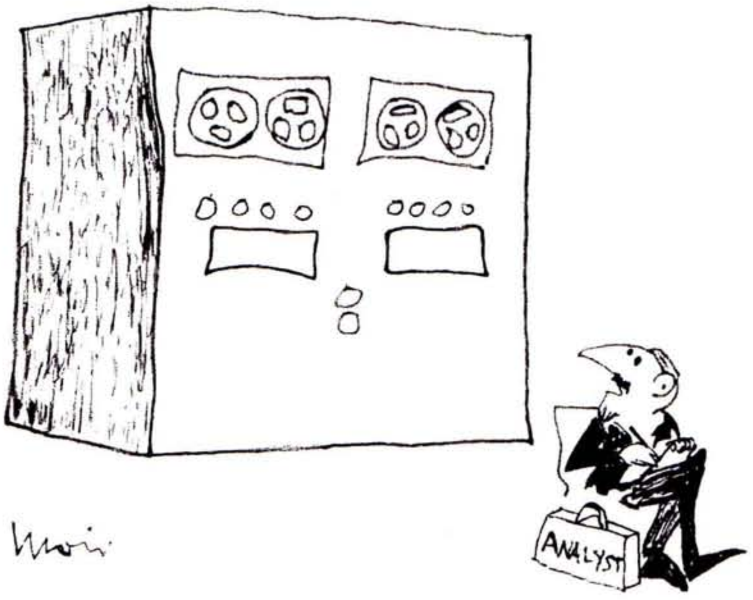
.ARC ARChived file. Use ARC.TTP or ARCX.TTP to restore

.PQ1 .TQT .PQG SQUeezed files (indicated by 'Q' in extension). Use EZSQUEEZE.PRG to etc restore

.LBR LIBraried group of files. Use DELIB.TTP to restore files

.SCR Entire disk SCRunched into one file. Use SCRUNCH.PRG or CRUNCH.PRG to restore

.LQR SQUeezed LIBrary of files. Use EZSQUEEZE.PRG first, then DELIB.TTP



"... and when did you start feeling threatened by mini-computers?"

# COMDEX News: Atari's Transputer

*By Chuck McManis, courtesy Bob Retelle*

This article from Usenet was posted in the GEnie Atari area...

Priced well below Mac II base-level price, the Transputer is aimed at 1000 pounds according to Jack Lang. For now, they will provide a set of three manuals (user manual, developers' manual and technical manual) for 50 pounds. You then become a registered developer, and get a priority place in the queue for developers' hardware in December.

I was at Comdex and talked to Jack Lang, Tim King, and Jessica Lang at length about this box. What I found out was quite enlightening to say the least. Let me say this first: this is a really neat machine!! Then let me say this second: it ain't cheap. When you configure it like a workstation, it costs like a workstation. So, before I go on, let's add some numbers to these statements.

At the show, the Perihelion folks were saying $2000 for the ABAQ (Ay-bak), and you need a Mega ST as well ($1700 to $3000 depending on which one you have) and a monitor displaying the images you're interested in. That's another $500 to $3000, where $500 gets you a Multisync and $3000 gets you the Multisync II Plus, which can display 1K X 800 pixels. Also, you really need a hard drive, so add another $600 to $1500 depending on size (20-40 MEG). So, minimum we're talking is $5000 to get a low-res, color system with a 20 MEG hard drive, and up to $8000 for a 40 Meg High-res system--which is still cheaper than either a Mac II or a Color Sun.

When the "real" machines become available, the ST will be optional (and hopefully they will have redesigned the clunky case), but Perihelion was murmuring $5000 without monitor or hard drive.

So, those of you who want a workstation for the cost of an Amiga or ST will have to wait a few more years for the technology steamroller to get a little further down the road.

As for the machine, it was running some neat demos primarily showing off its color capabilities. Since they were "canned" images being replayed via ShowAnim or some other framebuffer animator, it was not clear how fast the actual machines were. One was running GEM on a 19" 1K X 1K monochrome desktop. Unfortunately, most GEM applications couldn't really hack the huge screen.

I would be interested to know if Atari will be supporting both GEM and Helios on the machines (all the really good questions hit you after you've left the booth!). From the looks of it, it did not appear likely. The Perihelion people were quick to point out the slaved Mega was only providing I/O services and none of its memory was being used by the ABAQ. So I assume if you want to run GEM, you would either emulate the 68000 or use a version of TOS in ROM that passed all video requests on to the ABAQ.

Other interesting tidbits: the video memory (1 Meg of video RAM) was separate from the ABAQ's program memory (shown with 4 Meg). The internal slots will accept boards with additional transputer chips--or memory--on them, so you could continue to beef up this thing. And while some of the demos were written in OCCAM (INMOS's transputer language), Perihelion is going to support C as the primary development language (what no BCPL?). It also had a custom blitter that apparently was really fast. However, only the demos were available, so I couldn't really test drive it all that well.

Overall, it looks like an interesting box, and is probably going to excite a lot of graphics folks. I don't see a whole lot of them making it into the home market or the ever-lucrative business market. If Inmos, producers of the Inmos-800 Transputer, has really conquered its manufacturing problems and the UNIX-like Helios operating system lives up to its advance billing, this should be worth a look, at least.

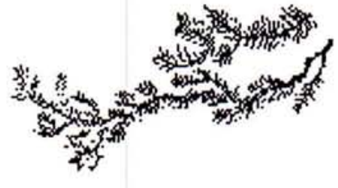
And while there were boxes to look at at the show, I know that more than half the work will be in the software. So things to watch for:

1) How Atari "positions" this product. Depending on when it gets out the door, it will be competing with 386/486 boxes, Mac IIs, and low-end Suns.

2) What happens to the various ST owners. (In my opinion they should split their product line like the Apple II/Macintosh computers are truly separate.)

3) Messages from people who have machines to play with of their own. (I am, of course, available for Beta Testing!)

This was one of the more interesting aspects of an otherwise PC/386/Laser Printer-dominated show. (These opinions are my own and noone else's, but you knew that didn't you?)



# 221 B Baker Street

*Reprinted from The Roughwriter, Submitted by Gordon Totty (MACE)*

The Adventure of the Floppy Disk: A Review of 221 B Baker Street By Dave Arlington (with apologies to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!)

It was a sweltering, hot day in our little flat at 221 B Baker Street. Holmes and I were just considering hailing a hansom cab to the cooler confines of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Regent's Park when our landlady, Mrs. Hudson, announced we had a visitor.

A gentleman of some distinction rushed into our flat. "Begging your pardon, Mr. 'olmes, but I've something 'ere that I thought you would want to see right away!"

Holmes waved a hand, and said to our guest, "Pray, sit down, my good man, and tell me all about the Atari 8Bit game from DataSoft that you have."

It would be quite a contest as to [who had] the more amazed look -- our guest or myself. "Really, Holmes," I exclaimed. "Surely this borders on some sort of psychic abilities on your part! He made no mention of any sort of thing!"

Holmes had a bemused look of contentment on his face as he started to explain. "Really, nothing of the sort, Watson. Just start at the source, and the inexorable flow of logic will eventually carry you to your destination. "Let me demonstrate. This article is appearing in an Atari computer publication. Therefore, I reasoned it had something to do with Atari computers. The gentleman's obvious superior breeding sets him apart as an 8Bit owner, and the callus on the inside of his right thumb is obviously from a joystick, not a mouse. So, I asked myself, what good news could an 8Bit owner have for me that could not wait?

"Surely Atari could not have released any of their vaporware hardware products. Therefore, it had to be software. I next queried of myself, who is still releasing exciting new software for the Atari 8Bit machines? With titles like Alternate Reality: the Dungeon, Mercenary, Theatre Europe, Video Title Shop and more, I assumed, obviously correctly, this was another new offering from DataSoft."

Having thoroughly cuckolded me again, we settled down to try this new piece of entertainment. Holmes booted up his trusty 130XE sitting next to the memento from "The Adventure of the Dropped Bit." 221 B Baker Street was the name of the software, and it is based on a popular board game by John Hansen and Co. Each player took the part of a different character. Holmes and I played ourselves, respectively, while our new-found friend found himself as Inspector LeStrade, and Mrs. Hudson filled in as Irene Adler. I thought I saw some slight discomfort on Holmes's part at her inclusion in the game, but couldn't be sure.

After a disappointingly brief game, which, of course, was won by Holmes, he asked me what my opinion of the game was.

"Well, Holmes, to be quite frank, it is almost an exact copy of the board game, including the simulated rolling of a die. The characters move to different locations in London acquiring clues to some one of the thirty cases that are included. The cases are very interesting, and the players are asked to discover different things each time, such as who did it, with what, and for what reason. Players can lock locations from other player with keys from the locksmith and unlock them with badges from Scotland Yard. When players think they have a solution, they return to 221 B Baker Street, where they are given a multiple choice quiz to determine if they have the right answers.

"While I do think it is an excellent adaptation of the board game, it does cost almost twice as much. I think the question is whether it is really worth twice the price to get a computerized version of the board game."

Holmes chuckled and said, "As usual, Watson, you see, but do not observe. The computerized version has many enhancements to the board game. Being able to play a main characters from one of your trifling stories, for instance. The animated graphics are very well done, and at any time you can call up a map of the whole city. Even you must admit, Watson, a slight chill in the spine when you heard the speech synthesis of my voice come over the monitor saying, 'Quick, Watson. The game is afoot!'

"But, most interesting, is the fact they've included some changes that would have even made the board game better. Players must now have a badge from Scotland Yard to enter 221 B Baker Street at the end of the game. This makes their use a little more judicious in game play. They've added two secret passages that take you to random locations that might vastly help or hinder you. Best of all, clues can be either printed on the screen, as they are, or in

→

one of twenty different secret codes. You know how I love cryptography, Watson, and now I can practice it in game play. This method of clue-giving is a vast improvement over both the board game and other computer mystery games that have been available for other computers before, such as Murder by the Dozen."

"You mean...," I stammered.

"Yes, Watson. This is an excellent entertainment value for anyone who enjoys these small matters of interest. I heartily recommend it. But now, Watson, I must relax. If you would be so kind as to hand me my..."

"Violin?" I interrupted.

Of course not, Watson! My Star Raiders cartridge!!"

## Bits of BASIC

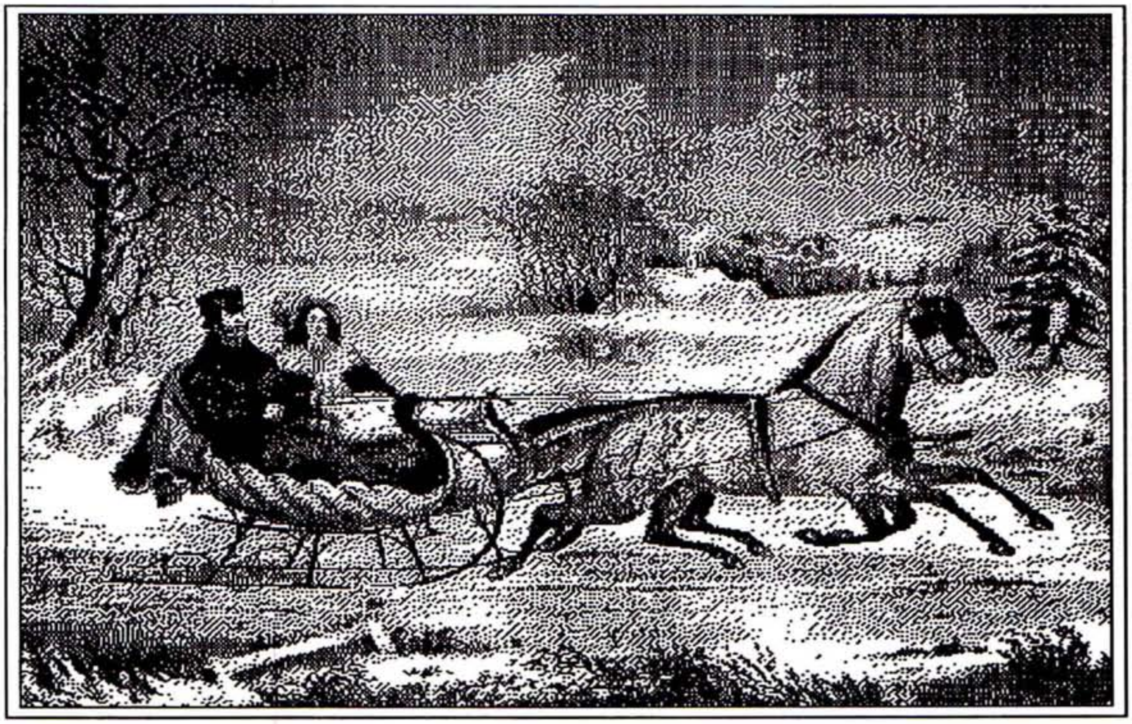
*Using the console keys on your Atari XL/XE*

Memory location CONSOL (53279, $D01F) is used to test the condition of the START, SELECT or OPTION keys. By PEEKing into this location, you can tell if any combination of these keys are currently being depressed by the user. NOTE: This *does not* include the RESET or HELP keys.

This little routine will demonstrate how to observe CONSOL from within your BASIC program:

```
10 X=PEEK(53279)
20 PRINT X
30 GOTO 10
```

Running this program will make your computer repeatedly print "7" at the left margin of your screen.



Now, by pressing various combinations of the START, SELECT, and OPTION keys, you should see the following values returned from CONSOL:

| Values | Keys pressed |
|---|---|
| 0 | OPTION/SELECT/START |
| 1 | OPTION/SELECT |
| 2 | OPTION/START |
| 3 | OPTION |
| 4 | SELECT/START |
| 5 | SELECT |
| 6 | START |
| 7 | none |

An example of how CONSOL is used from within a BASIC program might look like this:

```
10 X=PEEK(53279):IF X=7 THEN GOTO 10:REM
     The program will "loop" and appear to do
     nothing until a console key is pressed.
20 IF X=6 THEN GOTO 100:REM If START is
     pressed then proceed to Main Program.
30 IF X=3 THEN NEW:END:REM  If OPTION
     then program halts and memory is cleared.
40 IF X=5 THEN GOTO 200:REM  If SELECT then
     display Instructions.
50 GOTO 10:REM If none of the above then try
     again.
100 **********************
110 ** Main Program here **
120 **********************
200 ——————————————
210 – Instruction routines here –
220 ——————————————
```

It is important to note that CONSOL will not hold the values of the key(s) pressed after the keys are released. Therefore the program MUST be prepared to deal with unexpected results. This is accomplished in lines 10 and 50 above. And that's all there is to it!

## Silicon Spelunking

*by Brian Hall (WAUG!)*

Like a great cave, the ST offers many dark and musty caverns to explore. From the many i/o ports, to it's graphics and sound, the ST presents us with features and concepts that many programmers may never have had access to before.

In this series we will explore various areas of the ST from a programmer's point of view. All examples will be in Megamax C (which I highly recommend), but it shouldn't be much work to convert for use with other compilers. The object is to study various aspects of the machine-- the concepts presented should be applicable to any language. This month's topic: 'MIDI, not just for music anymore'.

MIDI is a standard that both defines a hardware specification and a software protocol. At the software level, MIDI defines what information can be exchanged and exactly how it is to be done. At the hardware level MIDI defines the connectors, cables, rate, and method of transmission. Leaving the discussion of the use of MIDI for MIDI instruments for a later topic, we are going to look at what can be done with the ports as a means of transmitting raw data.

The ST is equipped with 2 MIDI ports. One labeled 'MIDI IN' and one labeled 'MIDI OUT'. In addition, the 'MIDI IN' port also contains all the lines needed for what is usually a seperate port, 'MIDI THRU'. (You can make use of the "hidden" MIDI THRU feature via the purchase or construction of a 'Y' cable.) The nature of separate IN and OUT ports allows you to chain devices–the very feature that makes the MIDI ports more versatile for multi-device communication than any of the other ports on the ST!

Transmission of data is 8bit serial (much like RS-232) and occurs at roughly 32.5K baud. And this is where the fun begins. Rather than relegate the MIDI ports to the service of MIDI instruments, you can use the ports for high speed (relative to RS-232) data transfer. The applications are almost unlimited--to date I've seen a LAN (local area network) called MIDINET (which is public domain and includes Modula-2 source) and a multi-user game called MIDI-Maze (commercial, from Hybrid Arts). In fact any application in which you would like two or more devices to talk to each back and forth with a minimum of hassle is perfectly suited for use of the MIDI ports. Unlike RS-232, you have much less to worry about. The rate of transmission, parity, duplex, and more are already laid out for you. All you need do is get down to the meat of the task and transmit/receive what is necessary.

Since the MIDI ports are considered a device by BIOS, our programming task is greatly reduced. No devices to open or close, no initialization of parity, baud rate, and more--just simple I/O. To send a byte out, use Bconout(3,byte). To receive a byte, just save the result of Bconin(3). And to round things out, you can see if there is a byte waiting in the input buffer via Bconstat(3).

The example program (monitor.c) shows how all of this goes together in a simple program that monitors the MIDI port. While you could use define's for the functions, I prefer to use code. Defines produce faster code, but I find functions easier to modify, add debug code to, etc. With a little modification, you could make the program echo data received at the IN port to the OUT port while printing it, and run the program on an ST in the middle of a MIDI-Maze chain of computers. Anyone for a little priviledged info?

If you would like to download the text of this article or the example program, or just want to discuss ST programming -- call the Neon Brain at (313)747-6260 and 'join atari'. You can reach the BBS via Merit (300/1200 baud).

Next Month: Programming Tips and Tricks for the RS-232 Port.

Suggested Reading:
ATARI ST Intro to MIDI Programming, Abacus book #10 (Good, but includes mistakes and poor programs)

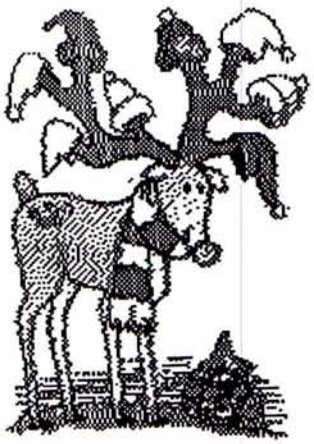
Synthesizers and Computers, Vol III in the Keyboard Synthesizer Library, Keyboard Magazine (VERY Good. A little dated, but very informative. Includes the full text of the MIDI 1.0 Specification)

MIDI Pinout: (*=ONLY on ST - NOT part of the MIDI 1.0 Standard)

| OUT | IN |
|---|---|
| 1 - *THRU Transmit Data | 1 - Not Connected |
| 2 - Shield Ground | 2 - Not Connected |
| 3 - *THRU Loop Return | 3 - Not Connected |
| 4 - OUT Transmit Data | 4 - IN Receive |
| 5 - OUT Loop Return | 5 - IN Loop Return |

(As seen by the ST)

```
3       1
  5   4
    2
```



```
/* monitor.c - monitor the midi port
** By Brian Hall, Copyright(c) 1987
** Created 04/04/87   Updated 04/11/87 */

#include <osbind.h>
#include <stdio.h>

#define K_UNDO 0x00610000L
#define MIDI 3
#define CON 2

/* Return a byte from the MIDI port */
get_midi()
{
  return Bconin(MIDI)&0xff;
}


/* Put a byte to MIDI */
put_midi(byte)
int byte;
{
  Bconout(MIDI,byte);
}

/* Return logic TRUE if there is a byte waiting for
input */
midi_status()
{
  return Bconstat(MIDI);
}

/* Get data from the input buffer (and ignore) until
it clears */
midi_drain()
{
  while (midi_status()) get_midi();
}

main()
{
  int byte;

  puts("MIDI Line Monitor--emucsc!bhall--11 Apr
87");
  midi_drain();
  puts("Ready. Press UNDO to exit.\n");
  while (1) { /* An infinite loop */
    if (Cconis() && Bconin(CON)==K_UNDO) break;
    if (midi_status()!=0) {
      byte=get_midi();
      printf("MIDI sent %02x ",byte);
      if (byte<0x80) puts("(Data)");
      else puts("(Status)");
    }
  }
}
```

# BITS AND PIECES

FROM THE

## BATTLE CREEK ATARI USER GROUP

Next Meeting Dec. 9, Voc. Ed. Ctr., 475 E. Roosevelt

### *Chairman's Column*

by Chuck Steele

Well, Christmas is just around the corner, and that means it's time for the ATARI CHRISTMAS party! We will be contacting you soon. There will be food, drink and computer fun. We should have a special Holiday Disk Of the Month. Hope to see you there.

We have Daisy Dot Printer program for those of you with XL or XE computers and an Epson, Gemini or Star printer. This program allows you to print in many different type styles, in a high resolution. In fact, the resolution is so good that it looks like type from a daisy wheel printer or a laser printer. The program allows you to have close, normal or wide spacing! The disk comes with a type editor so you can design your own type, or you can use the five type styles that come on the disk. Look in the August, 1987 issue of MAM, page 14, for a full review, and get your copy from the B.C.A.U.G. librarian. This is a must-have program for Star or Epson users!

The November meeting featured a Demo of the ATARI PLANETARIUM. This well-written program allows one to see the sky on any day or night of the year. The program places the planets in their correct position, along with the Sun and Moon. The programs accuracy allows you to simulate lunar or solar eclipses past present and future and any point on the Earth. A find command allows you to quickly locate any celestial object. The program even has Halley's Comet on it! For those of you interested in Astronomy, this is a must-have program.

Well, we are getting to the end of the year, and January is time to elect new officers. I want our membership to get involved in the politics of computing. The club can continue to support you, only as long as people show interest, come to meetings and get involved. I plan to step down as chairman in January, so we all need to consider who will be our new leader. I will support and help my successor get started. It was an honor to serve as your chairman, but I must step down to devote more time to other things. It is my hope that the club will continue to support Atari users in the Battle Creek area. To this extent I will aid and support the club, but from a more sideline position. The positions available are, CHAIRMAN, LIBRARIAN, SECRETARY, TREASURER, NEWSLETTER/MEMBERSHIP.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Chairman | Chuck Steele | 964-1701 |
| Librarian | Dan Egan | 962-2549 |
| Treasurer | Josephine Yeager | 968-8401 |
| Newsletter/ Membership | Tom Siemietkowski | 963-4475 |

## CAPITOL HILL ATARI OWNERS SOCIETY

### *Presidential Address*

by Leo Sell

Welcome to the "New" Michigan Atari Magazine. We are looking forward to working together with the new team. Hopefully the fine foundations laid are going to be built upon and the magazine will just keep getting better and better.

I hope you all read the burnout comments John Nagy made in his column last month. *Most* of the present officers and volunteers saw themselves in there. I hope you all see the need to get involved, pitch in, and help out. As usual, there is plenty of opportunity to do so. Right now we need an XL/XE Disk Librarian. This is a very important position. It requires a bit of work, and a lot of reliability. There are great rewards too so.. VOLUNTEER!!

I am becoming increasingly concerned about the state of Atari. More and more they are proving that we, the users, need each other. Ain't nobody else gonna take care of us!! Atari's attitude seems to be, "so the suckers bought a machine, now the heck with 'em". Hopefully, though, we will be spurred to support our local dealers and user groups. We are stronger together.

On a brighter note, my sons tell me a new software store, with some Atari titles, has opened in Meridian Mall. Check it out.

Both the 8-bit Sig and ST Sig meetings in December will be serving Cookies and Punch. Lots of Demos. In addition there will be a $1.00 special Christmas Disk and all of the Library Disks will be a special 1/2 price to those that attend the meeting. An Atari Gift will also be given to each member at this meeting.

I hope you all have a Happy Atari Holiday.

## *General C.H.A.O.S.*

C.H.A.O.S. is the Capitol Hill Atari Owner's Society, serving the Atari community of the Lansing, Michigan area. The Campus Hill Atari Owner's Society is the Michigan State University chapter of C.H.A.O.S.

Membership dues are $12.00 per year and entitle the member to a 1 year subscription to the Michigan Atari Magazine, a free disk from our regular library, access to our other libraries and facilities, as well as access to our other resources. Dues may be paid at any C.H.A.O.S. meeting or by mail. If not using an official Membership Application, please include your Name, Address, Phone and a list of your equipment and interests.

Sysop John Nagy and C.H.A.O.S. invite you to call one of the country's finest BBSes at 517-371-1106. 300/1200 baud, 24 hours a day (ATASCII/ASCII).

Inquiries regarding C.H.A.O.S., mail orders, memberships, etc, should be sent to:

C.H.A.O.S.
P.O. Box 16132
Lansing, MI 48901

General meetings of the membership take place several times a year. 8-bit and 16-bit Special Interest Group meetings take place monthly. S.T.IN.G. (S.T. INterest Group), for Atari ST owners, meets on the SECOND Saturday of the month. The 8-bit SIG Atari, for 400/800 and XL/XE owners, takes place on the THIRD Saturday of the month. The meetings take place at the MSU Physics- Astronomy Building, Physics Road, Room 118. Meetings begin at 10:00 am sharp and last until 1:00 pm.

Members and guests are welcome to any SIG meeting that interests them. To get to a meeting, take East Grand River to the Collingwood Entrance for MSU. The first available left turn is Physics Rd. The Physics-Astronomy Building is about 1 block from the corner, on the right hand side. Park in the gated lot just past the building.

Illegal copying, or any violation of copyright laws, is not condoned or allowed at any C.H.A.O.S. sponsored function, including the club BBS.

## *Elected and Appointed Officers of CHAOS*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| President | Leo Sell | 349-0404 |
| Vice Pres | John Baker | 641-4430 |
| Sec'y-Treas | Gary Ferris | 393-2593 |
| 8-bit Rep | Marvin Goldstein | 332-4160 |
| 16-bit Rep | John Johnson | 355-4219 |
| Membership | Gary Ferris | 393-2593 |
| Library Mgr | John Baker | 641-4430 |
| ST Librarian | Sally Nagy | 484-1976 |
| Publ Libr | Innaiah Pothacamury | 332-0558 |
| ST Publ Libr | Chet Kapusinski | 676-4539 |
| XL/XE SIG Co | Guy Hurt | 484-7675 |
| ST SIG Coord | Brian Goluska | 332-4415 |
| BBS Sysop | John Nagy | 487-5646 |
| Newsltr Coor | Rich Barnes | 349-0513 |

(Cont. in next column)

## GENESEE ATARI GROUP

Serving the Flint area

Software Notes by Ed Kalush

Welcome to December....A good time to stay indoors and use the computer. That means we sell mores disks and that is good.

Hi! This is your new librarian for 8-bit software. Sorry we missed last month's issue. There were five Christmas music disks. Three from GAG member Dave Petite and two AMS music player disks. Now for some more good news. I do not have any idea what disks will be ready for December. I hope to have something appropriate for Xmas. I think I can talk our new president into giving our Xmas disk to all paid members free! Wait til the meeting to find out.

This job is starting out interesting. It wasn't the surprise call from Jerry Cross when he said Jim Tuma would have a box of 8-bit librarian stuff to give to me. Finding out a week later that he has been in Florida didn't even seem too bad. Jerry's trouble in locating the new Happy drive was a bit hard to take. (I did receive a call saying he found one!) But when I found out my nice, quick little Okidata printer is not compatable with Jim's Cute Labels was all I could bear. So I wrote my own simple-print, plain old keyboard characters routine to print last month's labels. Sorry they're not so fancy, but tomorrow's the meeting and I'm sure Jim can solve my problem. Oh well, soon I'll be as efficient as Jerry was!

This is starting to get long so until next month... One more thing, yours truly will be floating around the South Seas during next month's meeting (ahhh !!) on his tenth honeymoon. Will see you all in January.

Live long and program....

## *President's Report*

By Jerry Cross

We have lots of stuff to cover this month, so lets get to it. Last month I received a lot of comments about the availability of Atari 1050 drives. So I did a little checking. It seems that Atari no longer makes these drives, and according to Sandi Austin, they are available only when you buy the 130XE package (computer, drive, and printer). This has been their policy for the last 4-5 months, but not once in my travels to Atari shows was this ever mentioned.

Sandi did say that the new Atari drives will be available by the time you read this, but will be shipped without the A-DOS operating system. OSS still has work to do on it, and Atari has not decided on how their upgrade policy will be. They plan to ship it with Atari DOS 2.5, which can not access the increased storage of the new drives. For now, if you are in need of a 1050 drive, you can still purchase them by mail from a few companies, or they are available from Rite Way in Detroit for $179.

Part of my new job as President is to nag folks about renewing their membership. Please check your mailing label and renew your memberships before they expire. Our strength is in it's members and we would hate to lose you!

For you new ST owners, we now have a large selection of Abacus books in our library. Contact one of the officers if you wish to check them out. Also, as of this date we still have not received any of the Antic or Analog magazines. They should be available by the next meeting. We have ordered six IMG Scan units for the club. These gizmos can be attached to your printer and will scan any picture (a page of a magazine, flyer, whatever...) and convert it into a NEO or Degas formatted file. The cost is $60 each (a 40% discount). See one of the officers if you are interested.

Due to the holidays, the Saturday workshop for November and December will be cancelled. Matt Howe is currently working with the school trying to set up an alternate date. If you did not sign Matt's workshop list, and wish to attend his 8bit programming session, you can call him at 234-1009 and get the new date.

The December general meeting will feature a repeat of the MIDI-MAZE fun-day. Due to a lack of advance notice, the October session of MIDI-MAZE was sort of small. However, we did manage to get 12 game players to fight through raindrops and attend. We had five ST's hooked together and had a great time! This meeting is open to everyone, and if you own an ST please bring it along. The more computers we hook up the greater the fun!!!

The January general meeting will feature a guest speaker. Mike Clayton of Electronical Software will come and show some of his current software projects, plus demonstrate his YEMACYB color picture dump software for the 8bit computers.

That's it for this month. Enjoy the holidays and I'll see you at the next meeting.

## *Meeting Dates*

Dec 9 General meeting (MIDI MAZE Day!)
Jan 13 General meeting
Jan 23 Workshop (no Workshop in Nov. or Dec.)

| | |
|---|---|
| Jerry Cross (Pres.) | 736-4544 |
| Dave Pettit (VP-ST) | 232-0508 |
| Nick Klak (Mag Lib) | 634-3936 |
| Matt Howe (8bit VP) | 234-1009 |
| Jim Tuma (8bit Lib) | 517-725-7359 |
| FACTS BBS | 736-3920 |

Mailing Address: Genesee Atari Group PO Box E Flint, MI 48507

GKAUG ATARI
GREATER KALAMAZOO
ATARI USERS GROUP

GKAUG Minutes

November's meeting was a good one. We had several new people that signed up as new members.

This is the last letter I will be writing to you as the president of GKAUG, it is time to pass on the title to someone new. It has been a fun year. I have had a chance to get to know a lot of you better and have developed some great friendships that I might not have had if I had not been president. I want to say thanks to everyone that helped make our little club more fun and thanks for all the joy you've given me.

Events discussed at the last meeting: We held elections for new officers, they are in order.

| | |
|---|---|
| President | Frank Felhiemer |
| Vice President | Dan Youngs |
| Treasurer | Dave Bryant |

| | |
|---|---|
| Secretary | Fred Farleigh |
| Librarian | Steven Beuchler |
| Disk Person | Dave Oldenburg |
| ST Person | Jim Zinky |

We had the new people from MAM come to our meeting and talk a little bit about what they're going to do with the magazine. I think everyone is looking forward to the new format.

The next meeting will be a swap meet. So bring in your old software and hardware that you don't use any more and see if someone might want to trade you something else for it. You might even be able to sell it. The meeting will be kind of a Christmas party, and we will have some good things to eat. So come on out if only to have a good time.

Special thanks to Jim Zinky for bring out his ST and printer with Publishing Partner. There were a lot of people that enjoyed it. The next meeting will be December 12 at 11:00.

Daniel Youngs

GKAUG meets the second Saturday of each month at 11:00. The location is Dewing Hall on Kalamazoo College Campus. The dues are $20.00 per year.

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President George Nosky
2440 Parkridge S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49506
(616)942-1527

Secretary Charles Baughman
2069 Fawn
Middleville, MI 49333
(616)795-7373

### *Meeting News*

The attendance at the last meeting was great; 45-50 members by my count from the back of the room.

MAM publishing will be taken over by Bill and Pattie Rayl. They will try to keep the price at $.80 for members and will also try to have the magazine in our hands before the meeting. They have a laser printer so the quality of print should be better. They also plan to make the print bigger (maybe I can put off getting glasses for a while longer). They are based in Ann Arbor. They have two bulletin boards: Molin's Den (313)420-0407 and Treasure CheST (313) 973-9137.

The demo of SpeedCalc was great. Next month, December, Chris Pelton will show his ST.

George presented the budget problem, and by an almost unanimous decision, we will collect $3.00 from each member to bring our treasury in line.

Steve Gilbert and Gerry Borysiak were appointed to a nominating committee. Call them if you wish to run for office.

We have collected about half the questionnaires, and George tells me we will try to have them compiled for the next meeting. We should also have a copy of the CHAOS library by the December meeting.

## M.A.C.E. Journal

### *MACE Minutes, November Meeting*

The November general membership meeting of the Michigan Atari Computer Enthusiasts was called to order at 7:30p.m. by President Don Neff announcing there would be only a few demos and an important discussion concerning the MACE Journal. Don also announced that MACE weST BBS would be going 2400 baud as soon as Sharie hooks up the modem she has in her possession.

Member Mike Lechkun, with considerable assistance from his 5-year-old son, Brad, showed the ins and outs of a cartridge-based educational game from Fischer-Price called "Linking Logic." The game is constructed to develop logical problem-solving in young children while maintaining a significant entertainment quality. Brad did not seem the slightest bit interested that the game was found in the bargain bin at Toys-R-Us for only $5, and was later heard to say, "This is a fun game!"

Corresponding Secretary Ted Newkumet showed the New York Times Crossword Puzzles package which comes with a variety of pre-constructed puzzles. The game appears in the usual grid format as commonly seen in newspapers, but has a text-only option that places the clues and space for answers on the same line. This allows the player to quickly insert answers for more obvious clues, then go back to the grid to tackle harder words. Ted noted there is no provision for creating new puzzles or dumping puzzles to a printer for "off-line" puzzle-solving.

Don announced that MACE was approached by the new publishers of the Michigan Atari Magazine to join as a member club in this publication. MAM is the official newsletter of several other Atari user groups in Michigan, including CHAOS of Lansing, GAG of Flint, BCAUG of Battle Creek, GKAUG of Kalamazoo, GRASS of Grand Rapids, WAUG! of Ann Arbor, and TAG of Saginaw/Bay City/Midland. Membership Chairman Bill Rayl and Journal Editor Pattie Snyder-Rayl led a discussion lasting more than 1/2-hour about the proposal and entertained questions from the members. Members were asked to vote on the motion to affiliate with MAM on a six-month trial basis, approval was virtually unanimous. MACE members will receive issues of MAM in the usual manner starting with the December issue.

After a brief intermission, member Bob Retelle demonstrated Pokey Player and the AMS music system for the 8bit New User Forum.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:00pm. Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 15, when we will hold our annual Christmas Party.

Michael Olin,
Recording Secretary

## *MACE Library Disk Exchange*

By D. F. Neff

MACE will trade public domain disks, on a disk-for-disk basis, with any other Atari user group. We have an extensive 8bit library and a growing 16bit library.

Please notice that this offer is for a one-for-one swap of individual disks; we will not exchange entire libraries.

This offer is open to any Atari user group in any state or country in the world. If you are a member of an Atari club which may be interested in such an exchange, have your librarian send a descriptive listing of your public domain library contents to MACE. Address it to:

MACE Disk Exchange
P.O. Box 2785
Southfield, Michigan U.S.A. 48037

We will promptly send to you a list of our disks in return.

(Special note to clubs who responded to my earlier offer: if you haven't had a reply or received your disks from me, write again ASAP! I answered every letter which I received, but two groups have said they never received my reply. If you didn't hear from me, write again.)

## *1988 MACE Meeting Dates*

| Officer Meeting | General Meeting |
|---|---|
| Jan. 8 | Jan. 18 |
| Feb. 5 | Feb. 16 |
| March 4 | March 15 |
| April 8 | April 19 |
| May 6 | May 17 |
| June 10 | June 21 |
| July 8 | July 19 |
| Aug. 5 | Aug. 16 |
| Sept. 9 | Sept. 20 |
| Oct. 7 | Oct. 18 |
| Nov. 4 | Nov. 15 |
| Dec. 9 | Dec. 20 |

All General meetings are held in Room 115 of the Southfield Civic Center at 10-1/2 Mile Road and Evergreen. Meetings begin at 7:30.

# TRI-CITY ATARI GROUP

## *Letter from the Prez*

Well, here it is, December already and time for our annual swap meet. As the year comes to a close, so does the current Michigan Atari Magazine. Pattie Rayl and her husband, Bill, (WAUG and MACE Atari Users Group members) are now formally taking over production of the publication. The magazine will now be done with an 8.5" x 11" format and will be produced on Publishing Partner. (This will be great for my review of Font Partner!! You'll be able to see some of the neat fonts I've been playing with!)

Remember to bring all of your old goodies to the swap meet.... Oh yeah, bring lots of cash too.... You might see something that you want to buy.

HOT FLASHES FROM THE FUTURE!

The month of December will feature a swap meet! There should be lots of 8-bit & ST hardware and software available for ridiculously low prices. (Hint: I've got a LOT of ST software I'll be dumping.) This is also our Christmas bash, so bring a goodie plate to pass. Things like cookies, brownies, or candy would be perfect. I'll bring a coffee pot. (Oh all right, I'll bring coffee too!) Although there won't be any demos this month, we will have both an 8-bit and ST set up to test any software you might want to buy at the swap meet.

Looking forward to the month of January, LeRoy will be giving a tutorial on using DB Master One for the ST. Several applications will be demoed (and built) as you watch. Al Jennings will be demoing some public domain software for the 8-bits (he just wouldn't tell me what!), but since Al always does a great job I'm sure it will be well worth your time to attend.

### *Relics to Relish*

The November meeting had an excellent turnout, considering that it was the day before the opening of deer season. For some reason the library decided to move us from our regular room into the kiddies' jungle room. Quarters were ery cramped and equipment had to be hauled quite a distance. It seems that another group (who by the way signed up AFTER us) got our room. Don't they have to find an open day like everybody else? Anyway, Marty Schmidt is calling up the person who arranged this fiasco to find out why this happened.

We started the meeting with the announcement our club now had some additional goodies available for members. We now have a VHS video tape titled "Using Your 520ST" that is aimed at the beginner. It shows you how to set up your system and how to perform basic GEM functions. If you'd like to check it out of our library, just show up at a meeting! We also now have labels for 3.5" disks. These labels are 2.75" x 1.875", pin feed, and cost $1.00 per 100 labels. They work great with DISCAT and LABELJR, two disk labelers in our PD ST library.

A change in meeting format was discussed and we now have an 1/2-hour question and answer period. Although we've always had an informal Q&A period at the end of the meeting, if was felt that more beginners would benefit from a formal Q&A time period. The general agenda will now be:

Opening of meeting
Club business
Question & Answer period
Demonstrations
PD Library access

Please, if you have any questions, bring them to the next meeting! The Q&A period will be available for any question,no matter how simple or complicated.

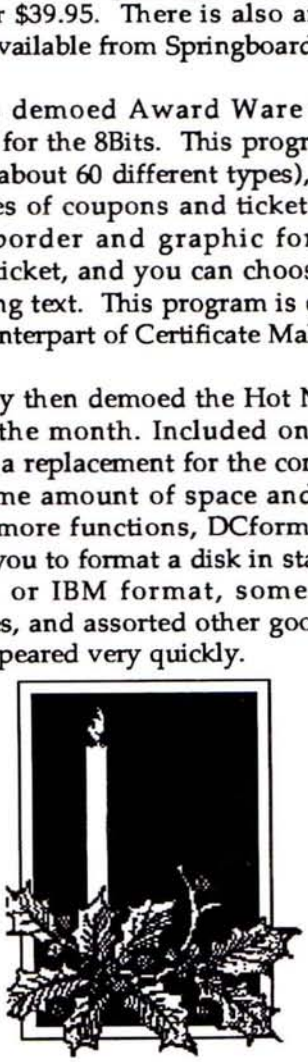
After resolving these issues, we moved on to the demos portion of the meeting. Tom Wheeler demoed Certificate Maker by Springboard Software. This program allows you to make nearly any type of certificate conceivable, from a Couch Potato Award to a Thanks For Nothing Award. Included are 220 certificates, each with a unique title and graphic picture. You can add your own text to the certificate with a variety of fonts and then dress it up with any of 24 borders.

One very nice feature is the ability to create a name list. If you wanted to make awards for a classroom you would just create a list of the children's names, then prepare the certificate you want and click on name list. Certificate Maker would then make an award for each of names on the list!

The printouts were pretty good -- better than PrintMaster, but not as good as Publishing Partner. I didn't count the number of printers supported, but there were a LOT. Even Tom's C. Itoh Prowriter Jr. was supported! The package looks excellent and is available for $39.95. There is also an extra disk of certificates available from Springboard.

Char Davis demoed Award Ware from Hi Tech Expressions for the 8Bits. This program also makes certificates (about 60 different types), but it can also make 7 types of coupons and tickets. You choose your own border and graphic for each award, coupon, or ticket, and you can choose from 5 fonts when entering text. This program is excellent and is the 8-bit counterpart of Certificate Maker.

LeRoy Valley then demoed the Hot November Byte PD disk of the month. Included on this disk was Schizo v1.3, a replacement for the control panel that uses the same amount of space and provides you with many more functions, DCformat, a formatter that allows you to format a disk in standard, twister, Magic Sac, or IBM format, some Print Master graphics files, and assorted other goodies. All seven copies disappeared very quickly.



At the end of the meeting a raffle was held for Certificate Maker and Award Ware. Ticket sales were brisk and the club made out better than we ever have. We almost broke even! Anyway, Steve Volker won Certificate Maker, and Char Davis won Award Ware. Congratulations Steve and Char!!

### *Expiration Notice*

Remember, once your membership expires you'll receive *no* more issues of the Michigan Atari Magazine!

8-bit Equipment Volunteers:

| | |
|---|---|
| Al Jennings | Monitor & Disk Drive |
| Club Equipment | 800XL |

ST Equipment Volunteers:

| | |
|---|---|
| Dennis Wright | Monitor & 520ST |
| LeRoy Valley | Disk Drive |

Once again, a big *THANKS* to all of you who loan your equipment to the club. *Please,* if you're going to be late, or can't make it, *call!!* It's not fair to the rest of the people when there's no monitor, or drive for the system!

### *Next Meeting*

The Tri-City Atari Users Group meets the second Saturday of every month at 2:00 pm at the Rudy Zauel Memorial Library on the corner of Shattuck and Center in Saginaw. Upcoming meetings are scheduled as follows:

December 12, 1987 January 9, 1987

OFFICERS of TAG are:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| LeRoy Valley | President | 686-6796 |
| Marty Schmidt | Treasurer/Sec. | 792-6029 |
| Al Jennings | 8-bit Disk lib. | 790-1980 |
| Joe Manelis | ST Disk Lib. | 790-0993 |
| George Stuart | Newsletter Ed. | 892-7545 |

Club dues are $20.00 per year. For this fee you get the Michigan Atari Magazine, support for both the 8-bits and the ST's, and full access to the club's public domain library. We currently have about 90 disks in the 8-bit library and 30 in the ST library. You can get copies of these disks *at no charge* if you bring your own disk to copy on (time permitting) at the regular meeting. If you don't have a disk with you, you can get the 8-bit disks for $1.00 each and the ST disks for $2.00 each. Non-TAG members can get copies of the 8-bit disks for $2.00 each and the ST disks for $4.00 each. If you need to renew, do it now! If you haven't joined yet, then do it now!

## WAUG

### *From The Prez...*

It seems like every year about this time I find myself saying "Well, it's that time of year again... Where did the time go???" The Christmas season does have a way of making many people reflect upon what they've done and where they've been during the past year, doesn't it?

WAUG! has seen a fair amount of change in the last 12 months, from developing a club Charter, to electing officers, to buying hardware, to attending the Atari Magic Show in August. I can think of no one who could have predicted all this in December '86 without being laughed at or considered moderately insane! For the most part I feel the club has taken positive *forward* strides, and I am anticipating 1988 will be another great year for our club.

As a way of celebrating the growth and strengthening of WAUG!, the officers decided the December meeting be dedicated to having fun (!) with Atari computers, and are keeping business matters to an absolute minimum. MIDI Maze Fun Night will find members sitting in a fairie ring of Atari ST computers, grinning from ear to ear, shouting curses and generally enjoying the opportunity to annihilate just one more of those silly little faces! In fact, I expect we will need to call out the armed forces to get Bruce Urbanski and Mike Pieronek to leave the room at the end of the night!

We currently have 6-7 people bringing their ST systems, and we have the capability of connecting up to 17 machines, monochrome OR color. We are anxiously looking for more volunteers to bring their computers and joysticks for this extravaganza. We will also need power cords/strips. Please contact Bruce or any of the other officers...

Many of you are aware that we will also have an 8bit system running the Flight Simulator II game. Both MIDI Maze and Flight Simulator II will be raffled at the end of the night. Make sure you see Bob Carlini to purchase your $1 tickets!
I wish everyone a safe and happy holiday season. May the joy that you experience in the coming weeks remain with you throughout the year!

Michael Olin
WAUG! President

## *WAUG! Minutes*

Things looked bad at the start of the meeting... the monitor cables we had would not connect up to the nice, big, color monitor in the room. However, Mike Pieronek came through and located the right adaptor, and was justly rewarded with a round of applause.

The topic this meeting was graphics and printer utilities. For the ST, Bill Rayl demoed a commercial program called Certificate Maker, by Springboard, and loaned to WAUG by United Computer in Canton. This program is very easy to use, and includes 220 pre-fabricated certificate templates, covering all occasions. A few are wide-open for you to fill in just about everything, but many of them are for specific needs, ranging from "Big Mouth Award" to more complimentary things. After choosing which type of dot matrix printer to use, you pick which certificate to create from the pictures in the manual. Besides filling in the name of the recipient, and other things depending on the certificate, you also get to choose from various fonts and borders. If you have a whole group to present the same certificate to, you can even merge a list of recipients into the printout.

Next, Mike Pieronek got up to demo a number of 8bit graphics and printer utilities from the library, which were part of the disk bundles he put together for this month, including:

1. Cute Labels (from the Genesee Atari Group). This creates fancy disk labels including up to two Printshop icons and double-height, double-width text.

2. Printshop Icon Editor. Since we had no joystick at the meeting, Mike was forced to discover the ST mouse works in this program. After loading in a Printshop icon, you can edit it using fonts of your choice, moving/copying pieces of the icon around, and using some pre-made patterns.

3. Daisy Dot (Near Letter Quality for non-NLQ printers). If your dot matrix printer doesn't support NLQ, or if you want to get more variety in the NLQ fonts you use, this program is a must.

4. Billboard. This takes a standard 62-sector (Micropainter) picture and prints it out as large as your imagination allows, up to something like 95 feet x 85 feet. Of course, the bigger you go, the longer it takes, and it does require cutting and pasting together the 8-1/2 inch-wide sheets from your printer.

5. BBKART. This is a drawing program that works with many standard picture file formats. It includes such niceties as designing your own fill patterns and a good zoom feature.

After these demos, we resolved some club business. First, the membership voted to purchase a used Indus drive for the 8bit library and a used SF 354 drive for the ST library, so present and future librarians wouldn't need to wear out their own drives with all the copying needed in those positions.

Treasurer Bob Carlini announced that the end of this meeting was the last chance to renew memberships at the old $5 rate before the new $10 rate went into effect. He also mentioned that member name tags would be present at every meeting and are to be returned to him (or a designated helper) at the end of the meeting. Finally, he promoted the sale of raffle tickets for drawings to be done at the December meeting. The prizes will be MIDI Maze for the ST and Flight Simulator for the 8bit users.

Bill Rayl, our Newsletter editor, described the upcoming changes in the Michigan Atari Magazine (MAM), which he will be producing as a business venture with the help of Pattie Rayl and Mike Olin. After he answered questions, the club voted to have MAM become, once again, the official WAUG! Newsletter. In other words, by being a member of WAUG!, you will now get MAM delivered to your door instead of a WAUG!-only newsletter.

As a final note, we were pleased to have a couple members of the Windsor Atari Users' Group (an alternate version of WAUG) come to the meeting and show off a great animation demo created by one of their members.

Next month: Raffle and MIDI Maze party! Also, due to popular demand, Mike Pieronek will have more printer disk bundles available, as well as bundles of Antic July-December, 1987 disks. For only $10, you can't beat these deals! Remember, these bundles are available for a limited time

## *How to Join WAUG!*

In Person: Come to a meeting! WAUG! meets the second Tuesday of each month from 7:30 to 10 pm. Meetings are held in Room 2228 of the University of

Michigan School of Education, located on the corner of South and East University in Ann Arbor (write for detailed map).

By Mail: Send a check for $10, payable to Bob Carlini (our Treasurer), to the WAUG! mailing address. Be sure to include your name, address and phone number.

### *List of Future WAUG! Activities*

| | |
|---|---|
| Dec. 8: | MIDI Maze Fun Night |
| Jan. 12: | Telecommunications |
| Feb. 9: | Games Night |
| Mar. 8: | Business Applications |
| Apr. 12: | Music |
| May 10: | "Hack and Slash" |
| Jun. 14: | Elections/Flea Market |

No meetings held in July and August

### *How to Contact WAUG!*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Clear Thinking | (313)761-2444 | (300/1200 baud) |
| Molin's Den | (313)420-0407 | (300/1200 baud) |
| Treasure CheST | (313)973-9137 | (300/1200/2400 baud) |
| The OutpoST | (313)449-8544 | (300/1200/2400 baud) |

BY MAIL: WAUG!
3487 Braeburn Circle
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

How many of the 42 computer words can you find? There should be 16 letters left over, they will make a secret message.

```
C T I D E H E L P R E F F U B M A
U O E S A C C W O D N I W R C M E
R N M E N U A U T O E X E C B A T
S L W M V E M P S K P A T T E S E
O I O A A I I C S A K R H V X T L
R N D C E N R I M K O E A P E E E
P E I R F E D D O S C S Y M C R D
H L W O E Y F I L E D A T A U D R
A A N N P C E P U T O O B T T I A
N T Y P O C K S I D C U T O E S F
Y R O T C E R I D N E T W O R K T
G L C O N T R O L L E R E C A L L
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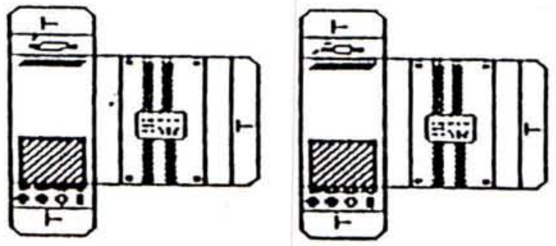
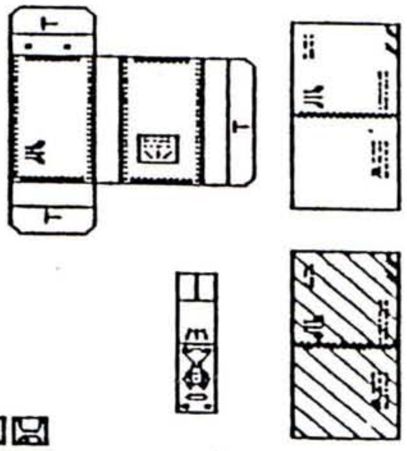
BACKSPACE
BOOT UP
BREAK
BUFFER
CASE
COMMAND
CONTROLLER
CURSOR
CUT
DAISYWHEEL
DATA
DELETE
DIRECTORY
DISK COPY
DOS
DRAFT
DRIVE
EDIT
EXECUTE
FILE
FLOPPY DISK
FONT
FOOTER
HELP
KEY
LOOP
MACE
MACRO
MASTER DISK
MENU
NETWORK
ON LINE
ORPHAN
RAM
RECALL
SAVE
SCREEN
SORT
WIDOW
WINDOW

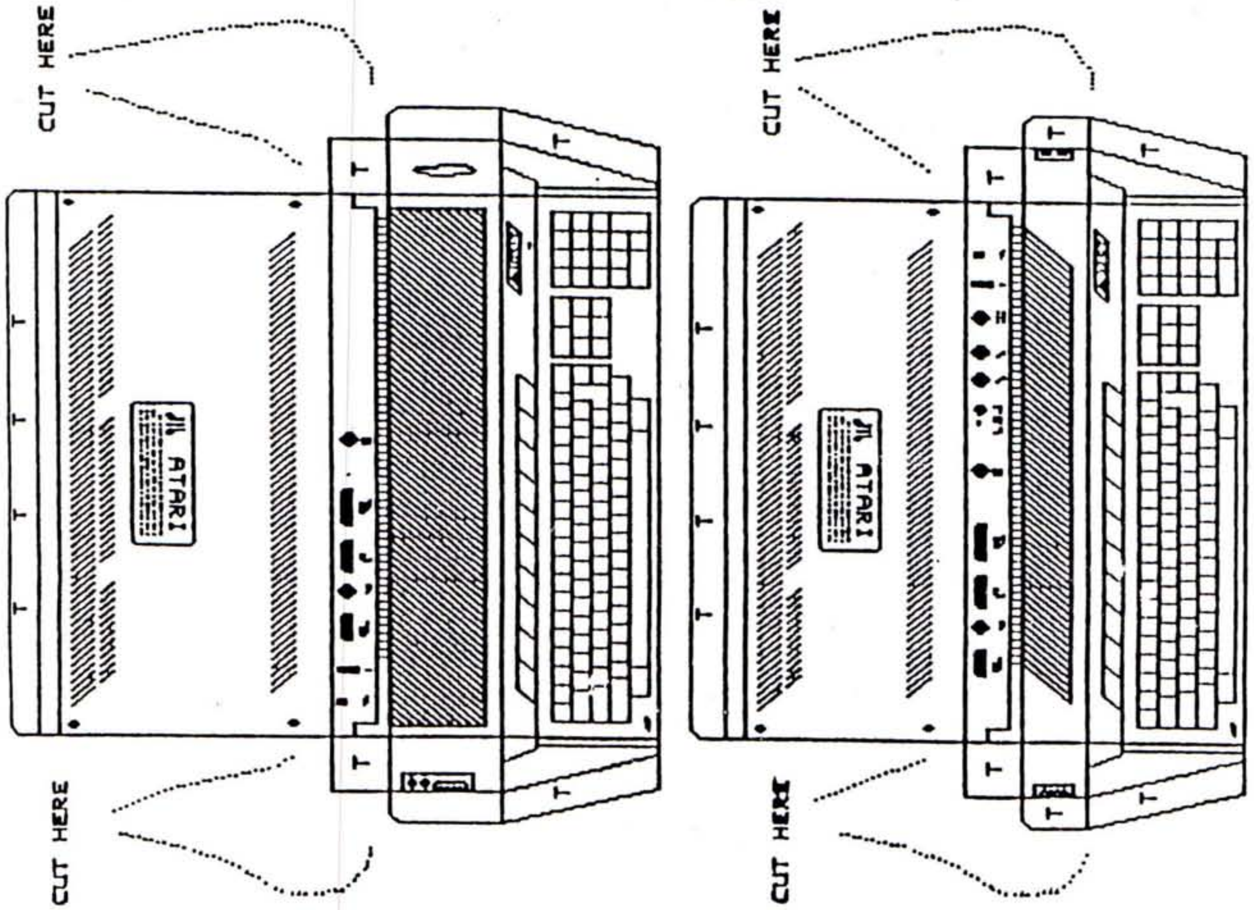
Answer will be in next months journal. HPN

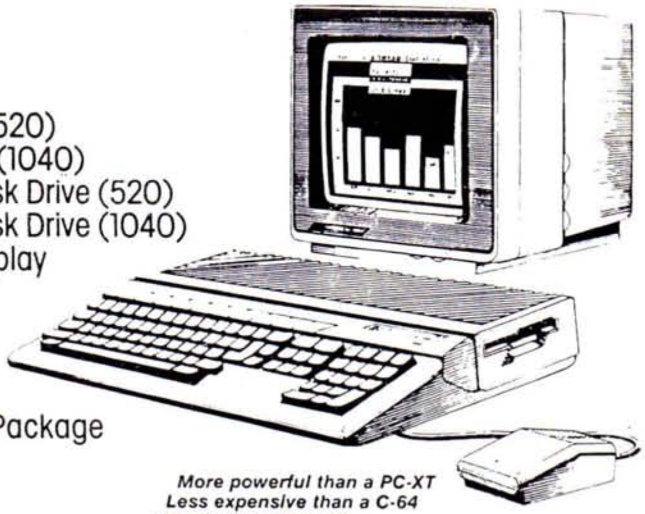
# The Mini ST

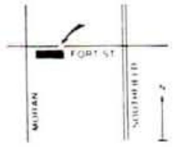


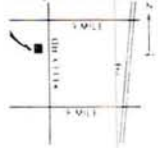


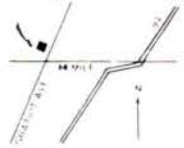
A TINY ATARI ST SYSTEM FOR YOU TO CUT OUT AND GLUE TOGETHER...











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